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SECRET MEMOIRS OF  
THE REGENCY









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THE REGENCY







PHILIPPE D'ORLÉANS THE REGENT

# SECRET MEMOIRS OF THE REGENCY

*The Minority of Louis XV.*

BY

Charles Pinot Duclos

*Historiographer of France*

*Translated from the French by*

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## INTRODUCTION

The name of Regency is particularly applied in the history of France to the government of Philippe d'Orléans, nephew of Louis XIV, during the minority of Louis XV (1715-1723). It was, from a political point of view, a reaction against the absolutism of Louis XIV, and the period was signalised by a recrudescence in public immorality and by the disastrous financial ventures of John Law.

Most authors of the period seem to be agreed that Philippe d'Orléans was, of all the descendants of Henri IV, the one who resembled him most; "he possessed his valour, his kindness, his indulgence, his gaiety, his quickness, his frankness." It is true that awful charges were brought against him, but many are no longer believed and among these the one regarding his relations with his daughter, the Duchesse de Berri. He was, perhaps, not so bad as painted and may have been

what his uncle, Louis XIV, termed him: "a braggart of crimes." Nevertheless, the fact remains that owing to his immorality, his impiety and his indifference to public opinion, he set an example which caused a general corruption of morals and made the Regency one of the shameful periods of the history of France.

The destiny of Duclos, the author of the "Secret Memoirs of the Regency," may appear strange. He was in his time, as much as his contemporaries Diderot or Voltaire, one of the great personages of the republic of letters; he was, more than any other writer, loaded with titles and honours, a member of the Académie des Inscriptions, *secrétaire perpétuel* of the Académie Française, historiographer of France: hardly has his name survived in the memory of men. A charming narrator, a kind moralist, a well-informed historian, he wrote excellently that language so pure and classic of the eighteenth century, but this did not prevent his work from slowly sinking into oblivion.

Born at Dinan of a family that had become rich in maritime commerce several generations

back, Duclos went to college in Paris. On leaving college, he began the study of law, which he never completed. Later, he frequented the *cafés littéraires*. It was already the fashion in which young men enamoured of literature made their debut in letters.

Of an elegant figure, supplied with money, witty and more conceited than modest, Duclos filled the Procope and Gradot cafés with the sound of his powerful voice, not the least intimidated by the wits of the time nor by the grand lords who were pleased to spend their fortunes in the company of men of letters. Duclos soon became a personage.

From a *bel esprit* of the cafés he became through the protection of some powerful people a *bel esprit* of the salons; he acquired a sort of vogue and his *bon mots*, often sharp, were repeated everywhere.

From certain circles he progressed into others, being received and entertained by some of the best known people of the period. He frequented the salon of Mme. de Tencin. He knew Marivaux, Montesquieu, Mme. du Deffand and Prési-

dent Hénault. He was a friend of Bernis and through him of Quesnay, physician to Mme. de Pompadour.

He became in turn mayor of Dinan, deputy to the *Etats* of Brittany, member of the Académie Française when about forty years of age, historiographer of France, then finally, in 1775, *secrétaire perpétuel* of the Académie.

In his capacity of historiographer, he had access to all the departments of the administration and specially had at his disposal the papers of the library of the minister of Foreign Affairs. It was not long before he discovered therein some curious works. First a history of Louis XI, begun by an abbé and never published; from this he evolved his own work of the same name; then on the death of Saint-Simon many manuscripts containing secrets of State were seized and from these Duclos drew most interesting Memoirs; those of the Regency written in a lively and at times remarkable style sustain the interest throughout.

Apart from the secret papers from which he drew, his own experiences were of service to him, for having been born in 1704, and having died at

the age of sixty-eight, he had seen the times and the changes of which he speaks.

“ I have personally known,” he says in his own Introduction to the Memoirs, “ the greater number of those of whom I shall have occasion to speak; I have lived with several of them, and, having played no part, am able to judge the actors.”

Beside the Memoirs, Duclos has written novels, operas, a *Histoire de Louis XI*, *Recherches sur la langue*, *Considérations sur les Mœurs*: of all these works, which, taken separately, are not without merit, the one to live will surely be the Memoirs.



**SECRET MEMOIRS OF THE REGENCY**





## SECRET MEMOIRS OF THE REGENCY

The Duc d'Orléans had a pleasant and open countenance. He was of medium height, but possessed an ease and grace of bearing which was noticeable in all his movements.

Gifted with rare penetration and sagacity, he expressed himself with animation and precision. His repartee was quick, to the point and brilliant. His first judgments were the most sure; reflection made him waver. Rapid reading, assisted by a good memory, took the place of continued application; he seemed rather to guess than to study things. He was more than fairly versed in art, music, chemistry and mechanics.

Possessed of true valour, modest in speaking of himself, and but little indulgent for those whom he suspected as to courage, he would have been a general, if the King had allowed him to be; but he was always in subjection at Court, and a subor-

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dinate in the army. A noble familiarity placed him on the same level as those who approached him; he felt that personal superiority made it unnecessary for him to glory in his rank.

He bore no resentment toward those who had wronged him and made use of this fact to compare himself with Henri IV. His lack of feeling in that respect came from his contempt for men; he supposed that his most devoted servants would have been his enemies had it been to their slightest advantage. He maintained that an honest man was one who knew the art of hiding what he was not; a judgment as unjust to humanity as it is dishonouring to the one who pronounces it. He had acquired this way of thinking from the most corrupt of men, the abbé, afterward cardinal, Dubois, who did not believe in virtue, nor in uprightness.

The Duc d'Orléans had had four tutors successively; they died at so short a time one from the other that Benserade said that it was impossible to raise tutors for this prince. Saint-Laurent, officer of Monsieur, and a man of the highest merit, was his preceptor; but he died too soon for his pupil. He had engaged, to copy the young

prince's exercises, Abbé Dubois, half scribe, half valet to the curate of Saint-Eustache. When Saint-Laurent died, the prince was sufficiently grown to allow of the assistant tutors — whom Dubois had striven to please — dissuading Monsieur from engaging a head-master, and Dubois continued the duties of the office. The remembrance of the tutors and of the preceptor was always dear to the Duc d'Orléans, but Dubois made him forget much of their lessons.

It is rather interesting to know the origin of this singular man. Son of an apothecary of Brive, after having studied for a short time, he became preceptor to the son of President Gourgues. It is claimed that afterwards he married secretly. Poverty, inspiring him with the desire to seek his fortune, with the consent of his wife, whom he left in Limousin, he went to Paris. Concealed by his obscurity, he entered Saint-Michel's College, there to perform the lowest tasks. Born with intelligence, he soon acquired enough literature to cause a doctor of the Sorbonne to become interested in him and take him to his home. This first master having died, the curate of Saint-Eustache took him

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in his service. It was there that he became known to Saint-Laurent. Yielding, insinuating, obliging, he won, if not the friendship, at least the compassion of Saint-Laurent, who employed him under him, as we have seen. They dressed him properly, so as to give him the appearance of an abbé, improve his poor and vulgar exterior a little, and render him presentable. Little by little he insinuated himself into the mind of the young prince, and ended by taking possession of it after the death of Saint-Laurent.

As intimacy discloses the character, the abbé felt that he would soon be despised by his pupil, if he did not corrupt him; he left nothing undone to accomplish this end and unfortunately was but too successful. It was not long before people noticed the influence of the abbé over the prince; but the slight importance of his person saving him at that time from jealousy, people were not sorry to have some one of whom they could make use on occasion, as of a tool of no consequence.

The resolution which the King made to have the Duc de Chartres (later Duc d'Orléans) marry M<sup>lle</sup> de Blois, his natural daughter, set

Abbé Dubois to work. However submissive Monsieur might be, the King felt that the proposition would be repugnant to him and that the German haughtiness of Madame would be indignant at it. He therefore bethought himself of securing the consent of the Duc de Chartres; and knowing that no one could succeed better than Abbé Dubois, to him he entrusted this task.

This became a serious undertaking. It was more difficult to destroy prejudice of pride than of morality, and this prejudice was nevertheless well founded on reason. Dubois succeeded in triumphing over it, however, by frightening the Duc de Chartres with the King's power, and by holding out to him the allurements of an increase of credit and of personal dignity by the continuation of the honours of the *fils de France*, superior to those of *petit-fils*.

The marriage was concluded, in spite of the uncertainties of the Duc de Chartres, the repugnance of Monsieur, and the fury of Madame, who gave her son a slap the first time he spoke of the matter.

The Duc de Chartres found, however, in the woman he married, face, wit, virtue and nobility

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of character ; but she was labouring under a singular delusion with regard to her birth. She imagined that she had done her husband as much honour as she had received from him. Proud of her birth, which she owed to the King, she took no notice whatever of the Marquise de Montespan, her mother. She was rather wittily compared to Minerva, who, recognizing no mother, gloried in being the daughter of Jupiter. This folly did not prevent her, with her brother and sisters, from boasting of the honours which she owed only to her marriage.

Less sensitive on the subject of love than on that of the respect which she demanded of her husband, she always felt more displeasure than jealousy towards the mistresses which he took, and would not have made the slightest advances to bring him back to her.

So much haughtiness strengthened the Duc d'Orléans' taste for a life which at times became grossly vicious. Human, sympathetic, he would have had virtues, if one could have them without principles. Abbé Dubois had made him lose them. The subjection in which the King held him

caused him to highly praise English liberty. It is true that that which he wished for himself, he left to others. He at times had rivals who did not conceal the fact. With regard to his associates, he was not particular. Anyone whom he fancied became his equal. In spite of his talent and intelligence, he could not for long find resources in himself; dissipation, noise, debauch, were necessary to him. He admitted into his intimacy individuals whom no self-respecting man would ever have acknowledged as friends, notwithstanding the noble birth of some of these. The Regent, although enjoying their company, did not esteem them any the more for that reason and called them his *roués* in speaking of them or before them. The licentiousness of his private life was such that the comtesse said to him one day during supper: "God, after having created man, took a bit of mud which was left over and from it formed the minds of princes and lackeys." Instead of getting angry at this remark, the Regent laughed heartily, for it seemed rather witty to him.

The curate of Saint-Côme, Godeau, delivered a sermon which clearly applied to the Regent. The



prince, to whom the matter was mentioned, said coolly: "What does he meddle with? I do not belong to his parish."

As to religion, it would be hard to say what that of the Regent was. Without considering that respect for religion should be the duty of princes more than that of anyone else, the Regent publicly affected a scandalous impiety. His excesses and his meannesses betrayed a man anything but firm in his convictions. In seeking to doubt the divinity, he went from one fortune-teller to another, and exhibited all the credulous curiosity of an effeminate man. It is very probable, that had he fallen into a lingering illness, he would have had recourse to relics and holy water. Madame, who knew him well, said of him: "The fairies were invited at my lying-in, and each one endowed my son with some talent. He had them all. Unfortunately, one fairy had been forgotten who, coming after the others, said: 'He will possess all the talents, except that of making use of them.'"

Madame loved her son tenderly, although she condemned his conduct severely. This princess,

with just sense, was attached to virtue, honour, the proprieties, and the etiquette of her rank. A sturdy health, which kept her from knowing any weakness, made her appear unfeeling for others, whom she considered as healthy as she was herself. Frank even to coarseness, generous, capable of friendship, she did not try to please; she wished to be loved only by those whom she esteemed. She loved her own nation greatly and it sufficed but to be German to be well received. All her relatives were dear to her, and her affections were regulated by the closeness of blood-ties, even towards those whom she had never seen. She esteemed her daughter-in-law and would have loved her had she been legitimate. Her strictness on the question of duty excited in her the greatest indignation against the Duchess de Berri, her granddaughter. All that could be praised in the latter was her face and grace, for much wit, which she always misused, is not a thing to be lauded! Lacking her father's good qualities, she possessed all his vices and to a more pronounced degree. He had been her preceptor in these matters; she became his imitator and surpassed him.

We have seen the strange vanity which the Duchess d'Orléans drew from her birth; her daughter blushed at owing hers to her. Such opposite ideas and such sameness of pride were not apt to preserve harmony between mother and daughter; their dissensions were therefore continuous and often reached the breaking point. The Duchess d'Orléans grieved at this, because she was a mother, this sentiment prevented her from hating her daughter; but the latter, who had renounced all good sentiments, did not conceal either her contempt or dislike. The Duc d'Orléans contented himself with disapproving of her conduct but dared not reprimand her.

The father and daughter lived in such intimacy that rumours, which at first had been but low murmurs, became a public topic of conversation, and reached the ears of the Duc de Berri. His religion did not permit him to believe them; but as he loved his wife to distraction, he was annoyed at the persistent attentions of his father-in-law; and this troublesome third party put him into a humour which he did not always restrain. He was besides frightened at the impious speeches of the

father and daughter. It was a contest between them as to who could say the most irreligious things and show the greatest contempt for morals. Their impiety was as much a mania as it was a vice. The princess impudently mocked her husband about a devoutness which was the sole preventive against the suspicions which she should have tried to destroy. The only thing the father and daughter had to justify themselves was an excess of foolish imprudence, but the folly of their conduct, and their indifference to public gossip, were not a proof of their innocence; and the Court, which had neither the virtue nor the religion of the Duc de Berri, was not so reserved in its judgment. The Duc d'Orléans was told of it and was very indignant; his daughter was only shocked in her vanity; and neither the one nor the other changed their ways.

If the Duc d'Orléans was enamoured of his daughter, he was not jealous of her, and seemed to look upon the dissoluteness of her life with indifference. Hardly had she married the Duc de Berri when she had love affairs, wherein the respect which was due her station compelled her to make

the advances. The liaison which she had with La Haye, her husband's equerry, was carried to an incredible degree of frenzy. Not satisfied with showing her passion, she proposed to her lover to take her to Holland. La Haye trembled at the proposition and saw himself obliged, to save himself, to impart it to the Duc d'Orléans. It was necessary in turn to frighten and to flatter that wayward spirit, so that the project should not reach the King's ears. Little by little the duchess calmed down, and that mad woman finally gave way to the impossibility of satisfying her wish or to the fear of the danger to her lover.

When her husband was attacked at Marly by the sickness of which he died, instead of going from Versailles to see him, she contented herself with asking the permission of the King, who replied that, being with child, it would perhaps be imprudent, but that she might do as she pleased.

She did not go and her husband died without having seen her or having uttered her name.

The Duchess de Berri, in spite of her vanity, trembled before the King and grovelled in the presence of Mme. de Maintenon. We shall soon

see the remainder of her life, which was short, correspond to the beginning.

Let us resume the narration of the events in their order. The day after the King's death, the Parliament assembled to decide on the regency. The Duc d'Orléans, the princes and the peers betook themselves there and as early as eight o'clock all were in their places.

It is well known that in his will Louis XIV appointed, instead of a Regent, a regency council of which the Duc d'Orléans was to be but the head, and that the Duc du Maine was to have the command of the troops of the King's Household.

As the report of this session of September second, and that of the bed of justice of the twelfth, wherein the young King came to make himself known, are in everyone's hands, I shall content myself with referring the reader to them, and shall only recall certain circumstances which do not appear in the printed record.

The Duc d'Orléans was equally occupied and anxious about so decisive a day. The premier president having sold himself to the Duc du Maine, the Duc d'Orléans bought the colonel of

the French guards, the Duc de Guiche-Grammont; consequently, the regiment quietly occupied all the avenues leading to the palace, and officers with chosen soldiers, but not in uniform, mingled with the people in the halls. Abbé Dubois affected to take into one of the boxes, Stairs, the English ambassador, so as to insinuate that the Court at London, if it were necessary, would support the Duc d'Orléans. These different measures were superfluous, the personal character of the opponents decided everything.

The Duc d'Orléans, in claiming the rights of his birth, did not forget to say flattering things of the Parliament. He at first spoke with hesitation, but he recovered his assurance by degrees, as he saw those present seemingly favourable to him. Finally the regency having been bestowed on him, there was more discussion on the guardianship of the young King and on the command of the troops of his Household which gave to the Regent and to the Duc du Maine the appearance of clients at the feet of the Court. The friends of the former, feeling that the sole equality of the part degraded him, advised him to postpone the session until the

afternoon to settle the other matters. This advice was a party stroke. The Regent closed the sitting and returned to his rooms, where he had time to collect his wits. He sent for the attorney-general, d'Aguesseau, and for the first solicitor-general, Joly de Fleury. These two magistrates, the most enlightened of the Parliament, have not yet had successors. The former, full of wisdom, of knowledge and of probity, sought, saw and always wanted the good. The other, with as much intelligence, but more shrewdness, distinguished at one glance between two good things, the one which suited him best, and knew how to cause it to be looked upon as the best.

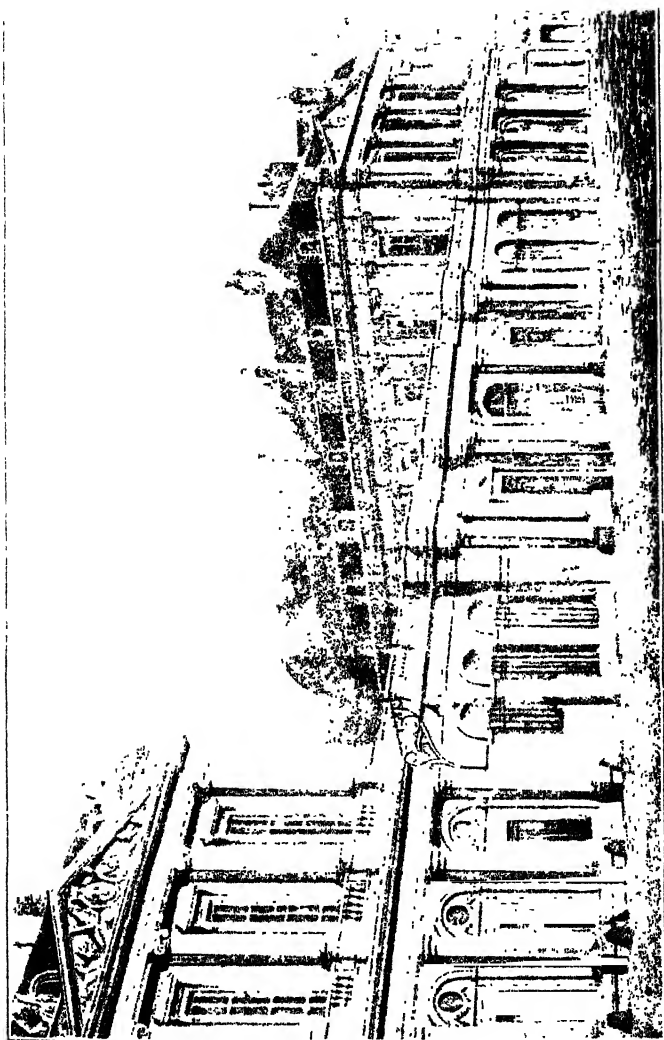
Both understood that it was no longer a question of examining if the execution of the will would have been preferable or not to the regency already bestowed on the Duc d'Orléans. They felt the danger of separating military authority from political administration. The Regent, supported by the princes and the peers against the legitimated, would have soon made use of the authority which he had already obtained, to take possession of that which might be refused to him,



a thing which could not be done without disturbing the State; whereas the Duc du Maine, being stripped of all his timidity, was a guaranty of peace.

Matters thus arranged at the Palais-Royal no longer found any obstacles in the afternoon sitting. The Parliament thought it best to appoint a Regent rather than he should appoint himself. A few, in setting aside the will of Louis XIV, were not sorry of the chance to insult the dead lion, and to appear to grant freely what they felt was bound to slip from them.

I see in the letters of Prince de Cellamare, ambassador from Spain to France, that Philip V had flattered himself of obtaining the regency and of having it administered in his name by a representative. Cellamare writes that he had sounded the dispositions of all those who could serve the King of Spain, and that all had declared that the proposition alone would shock the entire nation; but that all confessed openly that if the infant King should happen to die, Philip V would find no difficulty in passing to the throne of France. Cellamare cites, among those whom he approached





about the matter, the house of Condé, the Duc de Guiche, colonel of the guards; Courtenvaux, captain of the Cent-Suisses; Marshal de Berwick, Cardinal de Polignac; the Marquis de Torcy, secretary of State; the Duc de Noailles and Marshal d'Estrées, the last two being particularly attached to the Duc d'Orléans. Cellamare's instructions went so far as to order him to protest against any Regent who should be preferred to Philip V; he was wise enough to do nothing in the matter.

The Duc du Maine, who, if the will had stood, was to play a principal part, had a most wretched one. He knew not how to retain authority and allowed himself to be stripped of it. The Duchesse du Maine, in face a kind of little monster, quick, ambitious, with wit and little judgment, later undertook to restore her husband and almost caused his undoing.

The Regent, on leaving Parliament, betook himself to Versailles and to the King, and then called on Madame, who said to him: "My son, all I wish is the good of the State and your fame. I have but one thing to ask of you for your honour and I demand your word upon it." He gave it.

"It is never to employ that rascal of Abbé Du-bois, the greatest scoundrel to be found in the world, and who would sacrifice the State and you for the slightest interest." The sequel will show that Madame had more judgment than her son had word.

The Regent began with great reforms in the household, the buildings and the equipages of the King. Louis XIV had given no orders as to his funeral; the economy which Louis XIII had prescribed for his was conformed with. The entrails were taken to Notre-Dame and the heart to the Jesuits.

Louis XIV had ordered that immediately after his death the young King be conducted to Vincennes on account of the salubrity of the air. The Regent wished it, so as to be nearer to Paris and his pleasures. The Court physicians, more comfortably quartered at Versailles than they would have been at Vincennes, considered that the purest air was that of the place most to their liking; and all the servants, for the same reason, approved the medical faculty. The Regent summoned the Paris physicians who, for reasons per-

haps as disinterested as those of the Court physicians, declared themselves in favor of Vincennes; and the King was taken there on the 9th without going through Paris.

On the same day the body of Louis XIV was borne to Saint-Denis. The gatherings in the plain were tremendous. All sorts of food-stuffs and refreshments were sold there. Everywhere people could be seen dancing, singing, drinking, giving themselves up to scandalous rejoicing, and many were unworthy enough to pour forth insults on seeing the hearse which contained the body pass by.

The Regent, in his first labours with the secretaries of State, caused the list of all the *lettres de cachet* to be shown to him, and they were unable to give him a reason for the existence of many of them. He caused all those who were incarcerated for no real crime to be liberated, and many such cases were found; almost all were victims of ministers or of Father Tellier. Among those liberated was a Chevalier d'Aremberg, who had been imprisoned for eleven years for having assisted in the escape of Father Quesnel from the Malines

prison. I have seen him several times since my youth, and although he was not old, the rigours of prison life had given him an air of decrepitude. There was found in the Bastille an Italian arrested thirty-five years before, on the day of his arrival in Paris. He argued that at this time a grant of liberty would be his greatest misfortune, as probably all his relatives were dead or would not recognise him. The Regent gave orders that he be well treated at the Bastille, with liberty to go out and return. The condition in which the prisoners appeared was frightful.

This first act of justice won the Regent the greatest praise; and it is not useless to remark that the opening of the prisons took place only two days after the funeral of Louis XIV, and consequently was not the cause of the joy shown by the people on that occasion, but the wish and hope of better conditions being always the only thing left them, they applaud all revolutions in the government until they are again undeceived.

As soon as the King had held his first bed of justice, the Regent restored to the Parliament its right of remonstrance, which had been out of ex-

istence for a long time. He also named the different councils which he had announced. That of the regency, to which all the others were to be subordinate, was composed in part of members mentioned in the will. La Vrillière was its secretary, Pontchartrain entered into it also, but without office, and both without a vote. Marshal Tallard, although named in the will, being unable to have himself named, went about crying that all he had left for his honour was to have the will inscribed on his back. He was admitted later to the council of the regency.

The public, impressed by the virtue and the persecution suffered by Cardinal de Noailles, applauded his nomination as head of the council of conscience.

The Parliament was flattered to see d'Aguesseau, Joly de Fleury and the Abbé Pucelle enter the council of conscience, and Roujault, Goeslard and Abbé Minguy in that of the affairs of the interior of the kingdom.

Father Tellier, named confessor by the codicil of Louis XIV, seeing himself without office, in view of the King's age, asked the Regent what



was his present destination. "That does not concern me," replied the prince; "apply to your superiors."

The disorder in the finances demanded the serious attention of the government. In the last years so many books, good or bad, have been written about agriculture, commerce and finance, that it is to be hoped that the true principles will at last be known. All we shall have to wish for then will be learned ministers, and some more attached to the State than to their places. Without entering into a systematic discussion of these matters, I shall limit myself to reporting the events.

Marshal de Villeroi was the *chef de représentation* of the council of finances, and had never been anything else, whatever post he had held. He had been the possessor of one of the handsomest faces that could be shown at a ball; he had the air and manners of a *grand seigneur*, a mind narrow and lacking culture, old-fashioned politeness, a Court jargon, arrogance, vain glory, and was rather servile than respectful towards the late King and Mme. de Maintenon.

The Duc, since Marshal de Noailles, president

of this same council of finances, was its real master, and bestowed his confidence principally on Rouillé du Coudray, a perfectly honest man with much wit and with learning, but loving wine to excess, scandalously debauched, and without any restraint whatsoever.

One day, when before the whole council, and in the presence of the Regent, he was expressing himself with his usual freedom, the Duc de Noailles said to him: "Monsieur Rouillé, this savours of the bottle." "That may be, Monsieur le duc," retorted Rouillé, "but never of *pot de vin*" (bribery).

This dart was the better felt as the Noailles had the reputation of being not over particular in certain matters; and Rouillé's hands were so clean that a company of contractors having submitted to him a list of their partners wherein he found blank spaces, he asked them the reason of this; they answered that he might dispose of those places: "But, if I share with you," said he to them, "how shall I be able to have you hanged, in case you turn out to be swindlers?"

With regard to the Duc de Noailles, by an-

alysing him, several men might have been found in him and some with a price. He has (for he still lives) much and all kinds of intelligence, a flexible eloquence and one assorted to different subjects; fascinating in his conversation, taking the tone of all those to whom he speaks, and often through this making them adopt his ideas, when they think they are imparting theirs to him; a lively and fertile imagination, more fruitful in projects than in resources. Apt to dazzle himself, he imagines with fire, begins with warmth, and suddenly leaves the road he was following to take the one which crosses it. He is concerned for his personal interest only, of which he never loses sight. Master of himself, he appears calm when he is most agitated. His conversation has greater value than his writing; for in trying to combine his ideas, through excess of analysis, he causes everything to evaporate. His knowledge is broad and varied, but shallow. He receives men of letters rather well, and made good use of them for memoirs. Devout or libertine, according to circumstances, he caused himself to be disgraced in Spain by proposing a mistress to Phi-

lippe V. He then followed Mme. de Maintenon to church and kept a soubrette at the beginning of the regency so as to be in the fashion. The desire to please all parties has made him play embarrassing parts, sometimes ridiculous ones, and at others humiliating. A zealous citizen, when his own interests permitted him to be, he applied himself to the reform of finances and would perhaps have succeeded had the Regent allowed him to continue his operations. Whatever fortune the Duc de Noailles might have procured for himself, could be no object to the State. The shock of the pernicious Law system would at least have been avoided; a system which only enriched scoundrels, great and small, ruined the middle class, the most honourable and most useful of all, upset conditions, corrupted morals, and changed the national character.

As there was nothing set in the etiquette and the ceremonial of France, inasmuch as the ministers are interested that it should be thus, so as to always be masters, on occasions, to decide according to particular inclinations, the service which took place at Saint-Denis for the late King was the

occasion of rather lively discussions between the Parliament and the dukes and peers who bore the honours. The Regent was careful not to declare himself. He rather liked division between bodies, and said sometimes: *Divide et impera*; but there was as much weakness as there was politics in his conduct. Besides he affected to hold etiquette in contempt. On many occasions, etiquette maintains subordination, takes the place of manners and sometimes preserves them.

Seeing that under the regency one could regulate one's rights on one's pretensions, the Duchesse de Berri, more authorised than anyone else, took four *dames du palais*, although no daughter of France had ever had more than a *dame d'honneur* and a *dame d'atours*. She also decided to have a company of guards. The Regent explained to her but uselessly that never had daughter of France, nor Queen, except the Queen-regent, mother of Louis XIV, had such a distinction: it was necessary to satisfy her, but he gave at the same time a similar company of guards to his mother Madame, widow of Monsieur.

For want of the title of Queen, the Duchesse de

Berri, seeking to take to herself its honours and even to surpass them, rode through Paris from the Luxembourg where she dwelt, to the Tuileries, surrounded by her guards, with trumpets playing. Marshal de Villeroi proved to the Regent that this honour belonged only to the King, wherever he may be; now it happened that he then lived at the Tuileries, where he was brought on the 30 December 1715, for the convenience of the councils and of the service. The Duchesse de Berri was therefore obliged to stop at her first trial at trumpets which since then remained at the Luxembourg. She tried to get satisfaction in another undertaking in which she was not more successful. She appeared under a canopy at the Opera, and the next day at the Comédie, four of her guards being on the stage and the others in the pit. There was a general outcry and, in anger, she after that locked herself in a small box where she was *incognito*. Both the opera and the comedies were then given at the Palais-Royal. The Chevalier de Bouillon, who had himself called Prince d'Auvergne, suggested the balls of the Opera, which would divert from private balls,

where disorder often arose; while a military guard could maintain order at the Opera. The project was approved, and was worth six thousand livres of pension to the Prince of Auvergne for his suggestion rights. The proximity of the Regent's apartments were the cause of his often showing himself there after supper, in a condition not quite proper for the administrator of the kingdom. At the very first ball, state councilor Rouillé came there intoxicated, because that was his taste and habit; and the Duc de Noailles in the same condition, to pay his court.

If the Regent had intended to maintain the laws and good order, he would have taken advantage of the duel between Ferrand, captain of the King's Regiment, and Girardin, captain of the guards, to make an example; but he contented himself with having them removed from their positions. Without expressing himself too openly, he insinuated that duels had gone too much out of fashion. He permitted Caylus to come and clear himself of his against the Comte d'Auvergne. However, the Regent forbade a duel to the Duc de Richelieu, and the Comte de Bavière who, hav-

ing had words together, had appointed a meeting to settle matters. Shortly after that, the Duc de Richelieu and Gacé, son of Marshal de Matignon, fought a duel and wounded each other slightly. The Parliament issued a writ against them and the Regent sent them to the Bastille. Further inquiry being made, they were freed. Some time after that, Jonsac d'Aubeterre and Villette, brother of the Comtesse de Caylus, also fought. The Parliament proceeded against them, but they left the Kingdom.

More than a year before the death of Louis XIV, Stairs, ambassador from England to France, had sought to become intimate with the future Regent. He felt that if the Duc du Maine was in authority, having been brought up with the King's principles, he would be favourable to the House of Stuart. He therefore turned towards the Duc d'Orléans, and through Dubois, secured secret conferences, and persuaded the duc that King George and he had the same interests. The better to gain his confidence, he agreed that George was a usurper with regard to the Stuarts, but he added that if the feeble offspring of the



Royal family of France should happen to die, all renunciations would not prevent him, the Duc d'Orléans, from being looked upon as a usurper with regard to the King of Spain. He could therefore, said Stairs, have no surer ally than King George. Abbé Dubois, who had the aims which we shall see later, continually strove to inspire these sentiments in his master.

Hardly had the Duc d'Orléans been declared Regent when Stairs came to see him. He spoke to him of a conspiracy real or false which was, said he, about to break out in London against King George, and proposed to him a treaty of guarantee for the successions of France and of England. Whatever the London conspiracy may have been, the Comte de Marr, at the head of a party in Scotland in favour of the pretender, was making sufficient progress for people to advise that prince to go and strengthen him by his presence. He left Bar and was crossing France to go and embark from Brittany.

Stairs was informed of this and came to ask the Regent to have the prince, who was to pass at Château-Thierry, arrested. The Regent, who

wished at the same time to foment the disturbances in Scotland, and make a show of his zeal for King George, gave, in the presence of Stairs, orders to Contades, major of the guards, to go to Château-Thierry and surprise the pretender as he passed through. Contades, an intelligent man and well informed as to the secret intentions of the Regent, went away, fully resolved not to find what he sought.

Stairs, little trusting the demonstrations of the Regent, resolved to deliver King George of all fear by means of a scoundrelly act. He learned through his spies that the pretender was hidden at Chaillot in the house of the Duc de Lauzun, from whence he was to betake himself to Brittany. He commanded Douglas, an Irish colonel in the pay of France, to go and ambush himself at Nonancourt, with three assassins. On arriving there they asked so persistently, if a chaise had not passed, that they became suspicious to a certain Mme. l'Hôpital, the post-mistress, a woman of intelligence and resolution.

The news of the pretender's voyage had already spread since he had disappeared from Bar, and

the eagerness of these couriers made her think that they had evil designs. In fact, it has been learned since that Douglas' three satellites were determined scoundrels who, before leaving London, had arranged a settlement on their family, in case they should be captured and executed after having committed their crime. The post-mistress assured them that for the past days no chaise had passed, that it was impossible for any to pass without relaying, or at least without being seen, and that they might rest assured that nothing would escape them. Douglas, after having uselessly remained two hours on the threshold, put one of his men on watch, gave his orders to the second, in a whisper, and took the third with him to go forward on the road to Brittany.

The post-mistress immediately sent out one of her servants on the road to Paris to look out for the arrival of the chaise, and to direct it to the house of a trusty friend whom she went to warn by leaving the house through the back door. On her return, she learned that one of the two Englishmen, who seemed to be the superior of the other, had thrown himself on a bed where he was sleep-

ing. She told the one at the door that he would be warned as quickly within the house as outside, and suggested that he take a drink. He entered and a trusty postilion having excited him to drink, he became completely intoxicated. At the same time she locked up the one who was in bed asleep and sent for the constabulary; the locked-up Englishman was caught on the bed whereon he slept. He became furious at seeing himself arrested and referred to the ambassador. He was told that until he had proven that he belonged to the Comte de Stairs, he would remain in prison, where they also took the intoxicated man.

During that time the pretender arrived and was conducted to the house where he was expected. Mme. l'Hôpital sought him out there and explained to him what was taking place. The pretender, filled with gratitude, did not conceal his identity, and remained hidden at Nonancourt, as a precaution against those who were still free.

Douglas, soon informed of what had happened to the two Englishmen at Nonancourt, returned to Paris. A few days after, the pretender went away, disguised as an ecclesiastic, in a chaise

secured by his rescuer. He gave her a letter for the Queen of England, to whom she went to give an account of the whole affair at Saint Germain. The Queen gave her her portrait, the pretender also sent her his own, the situation of the mother and son not permitting them other marks of gratitude. The good Mme. l'Hôpital, satisfied with the service she had rendered, asked nothing of the Regent for what she had spent, and remained for twenty-five years in charge of the post which her son and daughter-in-law still hold. The audacious Stairs, to hide his crime, had the impudence to speak of the imprisonment of his assassins as a violation of the rights of people. He was made to feel how, for the sake of his honour, it would be well for him to keep silent.

Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux, died that year. He was a simple and artless man with many virtues. He said one day to a priest who was offering excuses for having been at a wedding dinner after the example of Jesus Christ at the wedding of Canaan: "This is not the most beautiful thing in His life." It was only after his death that his numerous charities to the poor families

of his diocese became known. He secretly sent thirty thousand livres yearly to King James II.

Marshal de Chamilli (Bouton), celebrated for his glorious defence of Graves, also died that year. He had been a handsome man, and in his youth had served in Portugal, where he had been much loved by a nun. It is to him that the *Lettres Portugaises* are addressed.

Although the Regent had given his word to Madame never to employ Abbé Dubois, he gave him a place as state councilor, to the great horror of the magistracy. What principally determined the Regent, was that no prelate asked for the place, not wishing to be preceded at the Council by Abbé Bignon, a plain churchman. People were not less shocked to see such a character succeed one of the most worthy prelates of the kingdom, Fortin de la Hoquette, Archbishop of Sens. He had declined the Order of the Holy Ghost, "not having," said he, "the birth required by the statutes." It was suggested that his genealogy be altered; he replied: "I do not wish to degrade the order by my birth and still less to degrade myself by a lie." The King having

offered to dispense him from furnishing proofs, he replied that he did not wish to serve as an example of a violation of rules, and persisted in his refusal.

If the entrance of Abbé Dubois to the Council showed little consideration for the public, the Regent and the Duchesse de Berri respected it still less by their habits.

The Regent gave to public affairs a morning more or less long according to the hour at which he had gone to bed. There was a set day for foreign ministers: the other days were divided between the heads of councils; about three o'clock he took chocolate, and everyone entered as is done to-day at the King's levee. After a general conversation lasting a half hour, he worked again with someone or held a regency council. Before or after this council, or this work, he called upon the King, to whom he always showed greater respect than anyone else, a thing which the child noticed very well.

Between five and six o'clock, all business ceased; he called upon Madame, either in her winter apartment, or at Saint-Cloud in the fine season,

and always showed her much respect. It was seldom that he allowed a day to pass without going to the Luxembourg to see the Duchesse de Berri. Towards the supper hour, he retired with his mistresses, sometimes chorus girls, or others of that class, and ten or twelve of his male intimates whom he called his *roués*. The principal ones were Broglie, the eldest son of the marshal of France, duc in title; the Duc de Brancas, grandfather of the one living to-day; Biron, whom he made duc; Canillac, cousin of the commander of the musqueteers, and a few persons obscure in themselves and distinguished for their wit or debauchery. Every supper was an orgy. There the wildest licence reigned: filth and impiety was the foundation or seasoning of every subject, until total intoxication put the guests out of condition to speak and to hear. Those who could still walk withdrew and the others were carried away; and each day resembled the last. The Regent during the first hour of his levee, was still so dull, so oppressed by the fumes of wine, that he could have been made to sign anything.

Sometimes, the place of the scenes was the Lux-



embourg, at the Duchesse de Berri's. This princess, after several passing love affairs, had settled on the Comte de Riom, younger son of the house of Aydie and grand nephew to the Duc de Lauzun. He had but little intelligence, a rather vulgar figure and a pimply face which might have been repugnant to many a woman. He had come from his province to try to secure a company, being only, at that time, a lieutenant of dragoons, and he soon inspired in the princess the strongest of passions.

Riom was magnificently lodged at the Luxembourg, surrounded by a profusion of luxury; people went to pay court to him, before calling on the princess, and were always received with the greatest politeness, but he did not treat his mistress in the same manner; there was not a whim which he did not make her endure. Sometimes, she being about to go out, he made her stay in; he displayed disgust for the dress she wore, and she changed it submissively.

He had reduced her to a point where she sent to him for his orders as to her dress and her plans for the day; and after having given them, he

changed them suddenly, was rough to her, made her weep, and come and ask his pardon for the thoughtless offences of which she had been guilty. The Regent was indignant at his conduct, and was often ready to have Riom thrown out of the windows, but his daughter forced him to silence, applied to him the same treatment she received from her lover, and he ended by being as submissive towards his daughter as she was towards Riom. If these different scenes had not had so many witnesses they would be incredible.

What was specially inconceivable, was the politeness of Riom to everyone and his insolence to the princess. He owed this system of conduct to the Duc de Lauzun, his uncle. The latter rejoiced in seeing his nephew act, at the Luxembourg, the same personage he himself had acted with Mlle. de Montpensier, and had convinced him that he would lose his mistress should he spoil her by a respectful tenderness, and that the princess wanted to be reprimanded. Riom had profited by his uncle's lessons and success proved their efficacy. That princess, so haughty with her mother, so imperious with her father, so vain

with the whole world, cringed in the presence of a Gascon cadet. She had, however, a few passing caprices, notably with the Chevalier d'Aydie, a cousin of Riom; but they were of short duration, and passion triumphed until the end.

The suppers, the revels, the morals of the Luxembourg were the same as at the Palais-Royal, since it was very much the same company. The Duchesse de Berri, with whom only the princess of the blood could eat, dined openly with obscure people whom Riom produced. There was even a certain Father Reiglet, a Jesuit, a fawner, habitual guest and so called confessor. Had she made use of his ministry, she could have dispensed with telling him many things of which he was a witness and participant.

The Marquise de Mouchy, lady of the bed-chamber of the princess, was her worthy confidant. She lived secretly with Riom, as the duchesse lived openly with him, and that rival, hidden and convenient, reconciled the two lovers when their quarrels promised to go too far.

A singular thing about the Duchesse de Berri

was, that she thought that she was making amends or concealing the scandal of her life by a thing which really aggravated it. She had taken an apartment at the Carmelites of rue Saint-Jacques, where she went from time to time to spend a day. On the eve of great festivals she slept there, ate with the nuns, took part in the day and night services and returned from there to the orgies of the Luxembourg.

The Regent also tried to edify the public and was no more successful than his daughter. He marched in great solemnity to Saint-Eustache on Easter and took communion there. The contrast between his daily life and this religious act made a very bad impression.

Although we were at peace with Europe, negotiations were not the less brisk. England was treating with both France and Spain at the same time, and strove to extend its commerce to the prejudice of both powers. It was to our interest to take as a model the conduct of the house of Austria, as long as it had ruled over Spain and the Empire, but Abbé Dubois drew the Regent

towards England, boasting to him of her power and assistance, in case the King should happen to die.

On the other hand Alberoni, with the sole title of envoy from Parma to Madrid, ruled the Queen, and consequently the monarchy. He was one of those men whom fortune sometimes offers as an object of emulation to the ambitions born in the dust. The son of a gardener, he left his calling when he entered that of the Church, which admits them all and often confounds them.

The Duke of Parma, having some affair to communicate to the Duc de Vendôme, general of the Spanish army in Italy, sent him Rancoveri, Bishop of Borgo. The Duc de Vendôme was in his shirt on his *chaise percée*, when the bishop was announced. He had him ushered in and did not constrain himself in his presence any more than he did before his army. While speaking of affairs, he continued the different operations of his toilet before the prelate, who was much scandalised at it, and who on his return, asserted that he would never reappear at so indecent an audience. The Duke of Parma sought out a man

who would have no right to be over particular as to etiquette. Abbé Alberoni was presented to him. The prince having conversed with him, judged that he would be the proper person to carry on the negotiations, and that the Duc de Vendôme, with the character he had, would be little concerned with the dignity of the personage, who besides was masked in the clerical habit. Alberoni was received as the bishop had been; but without taking offence at anything, he interrupted the conference with jests appropriate to the occasion, and which amused the Duc de Vendôme greatly. The general, on rising from his chair, presented himself in such a manner that the abbé exclaimed: "*Ah! culo di Angelo!*" The Duc de Vendôme was so pleased at the abbé's merry humour that he refused to treat with anyone else. The affair of the Duc de Parma was soon settled, and the abbé, after having rendered an account of it to his master, came to establish himself in the house of the Duc de Vendôme. His position was not quite clear. At times he appeared to be a chaplain, a secretary on other occasions, and more frequently a cook, making cheese soups for

the duc. He was specially able to amuse him by ribald stories. The subordinate position brought so little consideration to the abbé that one of the officers of the household, offended at his freedom, struck him with a cane one day, without the abbé seeming the least degraded by the act, and all that came of the affair was to make the duc laugh, and he thought neither more nor less of Alberoni on that account. At the end of the campaign, the abbé followed his master to France, and through his assistance secured a pension of a thousand *écus*. He then appeared in the light of an acknowledged secretary, and returned to Italy in the train of the Duc de Vendôme. The general having died there, Alberoni withdrew to Parma, and his prince, knowing him fit for affairs, appointed him his minister at Madrid. It was there that having taken part in the marriage of the Princess of Parma with Philip V, he began the flight which carried him so high. He successfully set aside all those who might be able to outweigh his credit, and worked to become a cardinal, either by serving Rome, or by making himself feared there.

The court of Spain was already on rather bad terms with that of Rome with regard to Sicily on which an interdict had been thundered on account of a matter which deserves to be mentioned.

It is necessary first to recall that about 1125, Roger, Duke of Sicily, caused his States to be set up as a hereditary kingdom by the pope, on condition that it would be amenable to the holy see. But by the same decree, it was agreed that there would be in Sicily a perpetually existing tribunal, wholly composed of laymen named by the King, and absolutely independent of the pope; that this tribunal should judge sovereignly and without appeal all civil and criminal cases from layman to layman, from layman to ecclesiastic, and finally between ecclesiastics, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks and chapters, even in cases of censure and excommunication, without that tribunal ever having to render an account of its acts to any one but the King, and never to the pope; and without the King ever being liable to citations, censures and excommunications.

This tribunal of the monarchy had since its establishment enjoyed all its jurisdiction, when in



1711, a farmer of the Bishop of Lipari brought peas to the market. The King's tax collectors tried to collect the ordinary tax for exposing the foods for sale. The farmer, without saying who he was, refused payment and had his peas seized. The bishop availing himself of ecclesiastic immunity which exempted him from paying the tax, excommunicated the collectors, without making an inquiry. The collectors, only through this learning to whom the peas belonged, returned them at once and complained of the farmer who, by a single word, could have prevented the trouble. The bishop demanded such ridiculous amends that the collectors rendered an account of the matter to their superiors, whose remonstrances caused them in turn to be excommunicated. The tribunal of the monarchy attempted to conciliate all parties and were also excommunicated; third excommunication on account of chick-peas.

The Court of Rome, impatiently enduring this tribunal of Sicily, had tried, in order to destroy it, to take advantage of a new government which it flattered itself to find weaker than the preceding one. The bishop, judging that his dignity would

not save him from prison, took refuge in Rome. The reception he received there aroused the zeal of several other bishops, and each having hurled his thunderbolt, prudently fled to Rome; and the pope immediately interdicted Sicily. Then a crowd of priests and monks, not daring to expose themselves to the punishment due to those who would observe the interdict, followed the prelates.

This schism was in full force, when, by the treaty of Utrecht, in 1715, Sicily was ceded to the Duke of Savoy, with the title of King. The pope thought that he did not owe any more consideration to Victor than to Philip V; but the new government of Sicily was firm, the more specially because there remained behind enough sensible priests to carry on the services, and because the catholic powers condemned this ecclesiastic undertaking. The Paris Parliament took sides in the matter, and by a decree of the 15th February, 1710, allowed the attorney-general to appeal by writ of error; a thing it had not dared to do during the lifetime of Louis XIV.

The Jesuits wishing to observe the interdict,

without giving up their establishments, used all their tricks to foment sedition. The Comte Maffei, viceroy of Sicily, planned matters so well that one night, all the Jesuits, without exception of fathers or brothers, well or ill, were carried away, placed on two vessels, soon landed on the coasts of the ecclesiastic State and abandoned to their good or bad fortune. They went to Rome as best they could.

The pope, much embarrassed by this deluge of monks, did not become more tractable on that account; but the apostolic chamber soon tiring of supplying sustenance to so many guests, a decree was soon posted in Rome ordering the exiles to leave the city, under the most severe penalty. They were compelled to obey. Hunger cooling fanaticism, they tried to return to Sicily, but Comte Maffei did not permit them to do so. They scattered over the countries of Italy, where the majority perished miserably. The King of Sicily was as firm as the pope was stubborn.

The pontiff, without raising the interdict, dared not use against the prince, nor his ministers, the censures to which he foresaw that but little atten-

tion would be paid. Matters therefore remained the same until the time when the Emperor became master of Sicily through the transfer of Sardinia, of which King Victor took the title. The ecclesiastic pretension vanished; the interdict was raised of its own accord; the tribunal of the monarchy remained in full power of its jurisdiction, and the pope found himself very fortunate that the Emperor, already master of Naples and of Milan, condescended to overlook the sequels of the adventure of the chick-peas, and allowed the matter to drop.

I have not undertaken to write a political history which would demand the greatest details, and fatigue its readers; but I shall recall the different objects of negotiations which may be necessary to make clear, link the facts and make known the character and the interests of those who had a part in affairs. It is but too true that treaties of peace are but truces. Hardly have nations laid down their arms when cabinet war begins. Negotiations are carried on, alliances are sought, so as to get into a condition to resume hostilities with more advantage.

Never was the state of ferment of courts greater than during the regency; but the State, much disturbed internally, remained at peace with its neighbours. The different interests of the princes, in crossing one another reciprocally, preserved peace.

The pope, seeing with fear a powerful armament of the Turks, feared for Italy, and asked assistance of France, Spain, and Portugal. The Emperor was at the same time thinking of defending himself against the Turk and to enlarge his territory in Italy, so that the pope feared him as much as the Turk.

Spain negotiating with England, had just concluded the treaty of Assiento, so favourable to the English, and Holland, having its new treaty, only thought of restoring herself by commerce.

England, where the succession in the Protestant line was not yet very well established, still feared a revolution.

Although the pretender had failed in his enterprise, the Jacobite party was still powerful. The Whigs and the Tories were continually at war with each other. All the powers needed to

preserve peace, and the majority, fearing war, were ready to declare it.

More than anyone else was the Regent anxious to preserve quiet at home and abroad. Stairs and Abbé Dubois, acting in concert, therefore persuaded him that if the King should happen to die, the renunciations would be considered void; that the Regent could only ascend the throne as a usurper, and that then he and King George, having similar rights, had nothing else to do than to form a close alliance to support each other in case of trouble. By this alliance Dubois assured to himself the protection of the King of England, whose credit he knew with the Emperor. He also knew what authority the latter had over the pope, and he promised himself to take advantage of every circumstance which time and intrigue might bring forth.

The Regent never had much desire to reign; the care he took of the King's health is the most convincing proof of this; but he believed that he would have been in duty bound to support the renunciations should the occasion offer. In exonerating him from the horrors with which

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slander has charged him, whose impressions still subsist in the minds of some, I am far from writing a eulogy of him; with all the possible intelligence and talents, he was always incapable of good government, and the regency, although at peace without, was pernicious to the State, and specially to morals.

Wise measures, precautions, a prudent defiance of the House of Austria and of England, a lasting alliance with Spain: such was the interest of France, but it was not that of Dubois. If he strove to foment discord between two Kings of the same blood, he was ably seconded in that project by Alberoni, another scoundrel of the same cloth. The latter, master of the Spanish monarchy, awed the pope, and the treaty of Assiento was so favourable to the English, that there seemed to be no doubt that Alberoni had received considerable sums with which he expected to buy the cardinal's hat if he could not earn it. As he had noticed the inclination that Philip V still had for France, he was careful to expose the renunciations as illusory to that prince; thus Dubois and Alberoni both strove, each one separately, to in-

spire in the King of Spain and the Regent a dislike for each other.

Although negotiations already were begun with England, Stairs continued to give disquieting reports about France, so as to secure for King George subsidies which the Parliament would not have granted, had it considered peace as a certainty. This manœuvre has often been used by the English ministers and always with success. That minister was labouring at the same time at the making of a seven year Parliament instead of a three year one. The majority of the peers, dissatisfied with the government, were opposed to this project and wished another Parliament of which they would always be sure to be members; while those of the House of Commons wanted an extension which would save them the canvassing which they would be obliged to do to obtain the votes in a new election of representatives. The Whigs, who were in power then, had so cruelly persecuted the Torys, that they feared their resentment should they get the upper hand in the new Parliament. The ministers acted so quickly on this occasion that the Parliament was extended.



The Regent, already quite busy with political negotiations, was beside persecuted by the Nuncio Bentivoglio, with regard to the Constitution, while Bissy and Rohan, hurt at the favour shown Cardinal de Noailles, sought to annoy him.

They took it into their heads to suggest the blessing anew of the chapel of the Tuileries where the service had always been performed, as long as Louis XIV had remained in Paris, and where the young King daily heard mass since his return from Vincennes. Their object was that Cardinal de Rohan should have the honour of performing the ceremony of that benediction as grand almoner. They did not know that that question already had been decided on the occasion of blessing the chapel of Versailles, whose benediction had been conferred to Cardinal de Noailles against the pretensions of the grand almoner, Cardinal de Janson. All Rohan gained by this attempt was to enter his protests. He undertook something else but with no greater success.

Cardinal de Noailles, in interdicting the Jesuits, had continued the powers to Fathers Gaillard, de la Rue, Lignières and du Trévoux;

the last had the title of confessor to the Regent. The grand almoner has the right to name the preachers of the King's chapel; and the one who preaches on All Saints' Day also preaches at the Advent.

Rohan on leaving for Strasburg, affected to select for the preaching of the sermon on All Saints' Day Father de la Ferté, related or allied to all the Court, and whose powers ended in August. Cardinal de Noailles could stop him short by interdicting him personally. He did nothing in the matter, but contented himself with writing about it, the day after the sermon, to Cardinal de Rohan, who did not reply, but the cardinal, tired of waiting for that reply, gave notice of a general interdiction to the Jesuits, and to Father de la Ferté. He had become a Jesuit in spite of the marshal, his father who always spoke of it with anger as the basest of acts. The Duc de la Ferté having died without children, the Jesuit would have become duke and peer had he not made his vows; and the ill humour he exhibited about this at times irritated the Jesuits, who relegated him to La Flèche, where he died.

To hinder intrigues of the Jesuits, the Regent named as confessor to the King, Abbé Fleury, so celebrated for his ecclesiastical history and specially for the excellent discourses which it contains. He had been under-preceptor of the Ducs de Bourgogne, d'Anjou and de Berri.

The Regent, tormented by Stairs, and annoyed by Bentivoglio, could have had both recalled: the first by quieting the anxieties of King George and by the public desertion of the pretender, without making a formal treaty of alliance with England; the second, by informing the pope of the scandalous morals of the nuncio. It is true that the pope might answer with an objection to those of the Jesuit Lafiteau, our minister to Rome. The fear of losing the hat, the usual reward of the nunciature of France, would have made him as pliable as the Regent might have wished him to be, but this required more firmness than he had.

The Duchesse de Berri caused to be given to her the Château de la Muette; and its price was paid by the King to d'Armenonville, who secured, besides, the enjoyment of the Château de Madrid, in the Bois de Boulogne, the survivorship for his

son Morville, and a *brevet de retenue* of four hundred thousand livres on his office of Secretary of State. The princess obtained besides for La Haye, her former lover, a third place as *gentilhomme de la manche du Roi*, with six thousand livres pension, and soon a fourth place was created for a protégé of Mme. de Ventadour.

The Duchesse de Berri, irritated at the mourning for Louis XIV, compelled the Regent to reduce all mournings by half, on the occasion of the death of the Queen-mother of Sweden.

So as to spend the nights of summer in the garden of the Luxembourg with a freedom which was more in need of accomplices than of witnesses, she had all its gates walled up, with the exception of the principal one, which was closed or opened according to the occasion.

The Regent bought for his natural son, the Chevalier d'Orléans, the post of general of the galleys, from Marshal de Tessé, who made two hundred thousand livres on it.

Rouillé du Coudray also induced the Regent to recall the Italian comedians who had been expelled by the King for having acted *La Fausse*

*Prude*, in which the public thought they recognised Mme. de Maintenon.

The new troop took the name of *Comédiens du Régent* and was, under the inspection of Rouillé, independent of the *gentils hommes de la chambre*. This novelty, for some time, caused the Théâtre-Français to be deserted, and Italian farces eclipsed the masterpieces of our stage.

The *brevets de retenue* were distributed without limit and without choice. Among so many favours lavished or prostituted, the Regent rendered justice to the merit of Vittemant by naming him under-preceptor to the King. An address which he had delivered to the head of the University, of which he was rector, had made him known to Louis XIV, who gave him the place of reader to the Dauphin. Hardly had he begun his functions as under-preceptor when the young King appeared to become attached to him. The Regent, who noticed it, and who, during his administration, was always careful to set an example of respect to the King, and to seek what would please him, thought of giving him the pleasure of doing Vittemant a favour.

He one day brought the King the *brevet* of an abbey worth fifteen thousand livres income, made out to Vittemant. The child, delighted to perform personally this master's act, sent for Vittemant, and in the presence of the Regent, Marshal de Villeroi and the Bishop of Fréjus, gave him the *brevet*, calling him by the title of the abbey. Vittemant, not understanding at first why the King gave him a new name, the Regent spoke and explained to him the favour which the King bestowed on him.

Vittemant lost himself in thanks and said that he was overwhelmed by the King's generosity; that his fortune was already beyond his desires, and that having no needy relatives, he would not know to what use to put an increase of income. "You will give it away to charity," said the Bishop of Fréjus. "And why," replied Vittemant, "receive charity to bestow it again? Besides, I am not in a position at Court, to know those who should be assisted; a curate could perform that duty better than I."

The Regent, Villeroi and the bishop, little accustomed to such language, first looked upon Vit-

temant as a clever hypocrite, and smilingly pressed him to accept; but the refusal was serious; nothing could conquer his resistance; they found it necessary to seek for this abbey a less peculiar personage and he was not hard to find. The modest Vittemant attended only to his duties while at Court, and when his functions were ended, he withdrew to the Doctrine Chrétienne. I could not leave in oblivion the name of so virtuous a man; I shall not have enough such anecdotes to tire the reader.

The chamber of justice, established by an edict of the month of March, was beginning its operations whose effects were very different from what had been promised. It had been expected that through the taxes immense sums would be drawn, sums which would suffice to the most urgent expenditures. It was understood that all the *brevets de retenue*, the military charges, were to be reimbursed, made free, that their sales would be stopped, so that the King would always be in a position to reward merit and encourage emulation. Fine projects, no doubt, but which are only imag-

ined by those who have not the power to carry them out!

All the fruit of that chamber of justice, which subsisted a year, was to open the door to thousands of denunciations, real or false. Consternation entered all finance and all allied to it; money was hidden and circulation totally stopped. A few financiers were sacrificed to the public fury. Influence sold, protections bought caused taxes to be remitted or lowered. Those which were paid became the prey of lost or intriguing women and of the Regent's companions in debauch.

Some went so far as to suggest a general bankruptcy. Those who offered this cruel remedy alleged that it was equally impossible to pay the immense debts or to allow the enormous taxes to exist; the weight of the latter crushing down the people.

Among the creditors of the State many had taken advantage of public misfortune; all the debts, legitimate as well as usurious, were principally limited to the capital; this did not concern the nobility, the peasants nor the artisans. The



clamours, it was said, would be loud, but the discharge of the taxes would arouse applause sufficient to drown all clamours.

At the beginning of the edict, its promoters expected to support their stand by motives of just and specious rights. The crown, they said, is not purely hereditary, as is the property of individuals, since women can not succeed to it. It is an entail from male to male. The King is only a usufructuary who can not bind himself beyond his natural life. The entailed properties of individuals are not answerable for debts; could the crown fare worse? The successor is therefore not responsible for the acts of his predecessor; he holds nothing from him, but from the law. If this principle, they added, can be impressed on the mind of the nation, the State can never again be in the position in which it is now. Each one will be convinced that in lending to the King, he can only count on the life and personal honesty of that prince. The King not being in a position to borrow and to lure by the hope of gain, found himself in the fortunate impossibility of ruining his subjects, and forced to an economical government.

The *rentiers* would no longer form an idle class in the State. The excessive population of Paris would return to the provinces. It might be feared that a spendthrift prince being unable to borrow, might resort to the multiplication of taxes, but excess in such matters is dangerous to the prince's own person.

The reply was :

Is there not the alternative between bankruptcy and the perpetuity of the taxes? Can not a government by the suppression of superfluous and abusive expenditures, by an economical administration, by a studied examination, a just distinction of the nature of debts, and specially by proving to the nation the integrity of a new management, and the good faith of the government, inspire confidence, re-establish circulation, lighten the burden of taxation, and begin the discharge of legitimate and urgent debts? Shall no difference be made between those who have sacrificed all to the service of the State, and those who have acquired their fortunes from its misfortunes?

The Regent was impressed by this argument, and the project of bankruptcy was rejected. Sym-

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pathy for the legitimate and unfortunate creditors only served as a pretext of the refusal. The true motive was the personal interest of the administrators of finances, who found in the liquidation, in the continuation of taxes, in the renewal of agreements, a thousand means of making creatures and of amassing millions.

The Law system has made as many and more unfortunates than bankruptcy, has corrupted morals, and has had none of the advantages of the proposed edict. This system, considered by itself, has had its apologists, who have pretended that it was only pernicious through the abusive use made of it and through the ill will of those who had an interest in causing it to fail. Others have always condemned it as indefensible under an absolute monarchy, whatever advantages it might have under a republic and in a mixed government. Experience has but too well justified that sentiment.

Law's best operation was the establishment of the *banque générale*, composed of twelve hundred shares of three thousand livres each. Its advantage was felt at first; circulation was restored and



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its success would have been assured if that banque générale had not degenerated into a banque royale: which soon gave birth to that unfortunate system.

A few assemblies of Protestants, in Poitou, in Languedoc and in Guienne, caused the government some anxiety. It was further increased by the discovery of a large number of guns and bayonets near a place where the Protestants had assembled. The fear of an uprising and the horror of renewing the barbarities which had followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes strongly agitated the Regent's mind. He was on the point of repealing the edict and recalling the Protestants. He conferred about the matter separately with several members of the council and all deterred him from his idea. Questions for or against liberty, in matters of religion, are usually decided by passion. Irreligion, as well as superstition, has its fanaticism, and the Regent being very susceptible to the former, he had to be made to see the affair as a statesman and solely from the political side.

It is indubitable that consciences should be free;

but does the tranquillity of states allow of cults being the same? The example of England and Holland is not exactly applicable to France in its present condition: First, the two mentioned states have, as we, their national cult, the other religions being only tolerated; second, they are manifold, and it is easier to keep the peace among four or five religions than it is between two that are equally powerful, because divided hatred is weakened and people can then limit themselves to the emulation of good morals; third, in England and in Holland, the heterodox are as numerous as the orthodox. The experience of their calamities of the past makes them fear to see their nation armed against itself.

In France, the Protestants are few in comparison to the Catholics. If the Protestants are granted public worship, and in every respect the same privileges as other citizens, their number will increase, the attraction of novelty will bring them converts among the Catholics themselves, dissension will spring up in families, religious zeal will become fanaticism; minds will become incensed; a popular uprising will be the signal of

a civil war; we shall again be thrown into the horrors which we recall only with terror.

Uniformity of religion would be the greatest blessing of the State, but it is not the work of man. Let us limit ourselves to the efforts of human prudence. Let the government, without formally repealing the edict of revocation, or placing the Protestants in the position they formerly held, assure them of the rights of citizenship by a duly registered declaration. Let them be free as to their sentiments, let us no longer demand that, by a criminal complacency in their eyes, they come to take part in our worship, but let us not allow them a public one. Let the exercise of their religion take place in and be limited to the home. Let them enjoy all the rights of citizens whose burdens they bear, but let them not aspire to any public office or employment. Let us severely punish whomsoever disturbs their tranquillity. No persecution, much indifference and forgetfulness: that is death to all sects. That which exists through blind obstinacy merely vegetates in contempt. Truth itself, constantly despised, but not persecuted, would have but few partisans.



I speak from experience. I have seen in my youth a small town wherein the Protestants were in numbers equal to the Catholics. A nobleman, of beneficent character, who has dominion over it, by rendering exact justice to the Protestants, but by procuring all distinctions to the Catholics, by favouring marriages, has brought matters to a point that there are but two old men remaining who, while persevering in their sect, have themselves consented to the abjuration of their children.

Civil toleration is by right natural; but to impress it in the mind of a nation, there would be required the long reign of an absolute monarch, preserver of morals by authority and example, strict and respectful observer of the established cult, were he indifferent to all of them. The Regent unfortunately possessed but the last of these qualities. It was sufficient to make him favourable to the return of the Protestants, but Abbé Dubois, wishing at all cost to become cardinal, felt that he could ask nothing of Rome after such a scandal; and as he was the Regent's great casuist in affairs

of politics and religion, he caused him to abandon his design.

At that time the princes of the blood presented a petition to the King, signed by M. le duc (de Bourbon), the Comte de Charolais and the Prince de Conti, against the edict of 1711 and the declaration of 1715, which gave to the Duc du Maine and to the Comte de Toulouse the rank of princes of the blood and the right of succession to the crown.

Immediately the dukes and peers presented a request to the King, tending to cause the legitimated princes to be reduced to the rank of their peerage.

England, while negotiating with the Regent, was also treating with Spain, from which it wished to secure many commercial advantages; and the Regent, who only desired to foster peace, willingly lent himself to the aims of England. To this end, he represented to King George that that which would please Spain most would be the restitution of Gibraltar. George, with a powerful fleet, and master of Port-Mahon, had but little use for Gibraltar, and spent considerable on it.

He therefore consented to this sacrifice, but fearing to anger the English, he sent word to the Regent that the affair could succeed only by the greatest secrecy; that it was necessary to have a faithful man, at Madrid, to treat directly with the King of Spain, without the participation of Alberoni. The Regent entrusted the mission to Louville, who had been *gentilhomme de la chambre* of Philip V and, of all Frenchmen, the one whom that prince had most liked. It was known that it was only with regret that he had sacrificed him to the Princesse des Ursins; and no one doubted that Philip, on seeing him again, would be as friendly with him as he had been from infancy.

The motives which caused Louville to be chosen were precisely those which caused the whole affair to fail.

Provided with his instructions, he departed secretly, and arrived in Madrid, at the Duc de Saint-Aignan's, our ambassador. Alberoni, notified of this by his spies, of whom he had a great number, conceived the greatest anxiety at so mysterious a voyage, and thought that its sole object was to

ruin him in the mind of the King. Hardly had Louville arrived when he received the order to leave Spain at once. He replied that he was possessed of a letter of credence from the King and of another from the Regent which he was to deliver into the hands of His Catholic Majesty, and that he would not leave without having executed his commission. That same night, he had so violent an attack of nephritis that a bath was prepared for him. His reply not being the kind to reassure Alberoni, he came in person to the residence of the Duc de Saint-Aignan and found Louville in the bath. He told him that the King was much displeased at his arrival, that he absolutely refused to see him, and that all he had to do was to hand him his dispatches and return home at once. Louville replied that his duty forbade him to do the first, and that his condition did not permit him to carry out the second. Alberoni, being unable to doubt Louville's impossibility to resume his journey, pretended to pity him, exaggerated the supposed anger of the King, and promised to do all in his power to have an excuse accepted which, however, could only last as long as his malady.

At the end of three days, Louville again received orders more absolute than the first. Finally seeing that he could not obtain an audience, and suspecting that Alberoni took advantage of the King's name, he risked presenting himself on the King's passage, in the hope of being seen by him and of being able to present his letters. But Alberoni, who had Louville's every movement watched, rendered this attempt useless by having the King surrounded by a large body of creatures sold to the minister. A moment after, the Secretary of State, Gimaldo, came to Louville, and positively ordered him, in the King's name, to leave, threatening to have him removed by force if he delayed an instant.

The Duc de Saint-Aignan, perhaps displeased at not being in the secret of the affair, and fearing some violence, pressed Louville to obey. He accordingly departed without having done anything, and without the King ever having known what was taking place in his name; and an insolent minister was the cause of the failure of Spain's only opportunity to recover Gibraltar.

Measures had been so well taken that if Lou-

ville could have seen the King of Spain, he would easily have made him accept and sign the but slightly important conditions demanded by King George, and the latter was immediately to send the order to the governor to turn over the place: a body of troops was to appear on the instant to take possession and Gibraltar would have been in the power of the Spanish before the Parliament of England had even heard it rumoured.

Alberoni knew that he was hateful to the Spaniards, that his sole authority came from the Queen, that he was suspicious to the King, and that that prince would certainly dismiss him if the complaints of his administration should reach him. He therefore spared nothing to remove all those who might reveal his manœuvres or injure his credit. The two men who disturbed him most at Court were Cardinal del Giudice, prime minister in name, great inquisitor and tutor of the Prince des Asturies; the other, the Jesuit d'Aubenton, confessor to the King. The latter did not like Alberoni; but he did not care to try his strength against a minister dear to the Queen, and recalled that the Princesse des Ursins had

had him sent away, and did not the less fear the Queen, who did not like the Jesuits and had never wanted one for a confessor.

Alberoni, covetous of the cardinal's hat, knew that del Giudice was indignant that he should have such a colleague, and was not ignorant of the fact that the pope had great confidence in d'Aubenton, with whom he even corresponded. Consequently, he decided to attach the latter to himself so as to ruin the other; and both worked towards that end in concert, each one in his own way. Alberoni suggested to the Queen that it was dangerous for her to leave the heir to the monarchy in the hands of a man who instilled in him the principles of the former government, and would estrange him from a stepmother; so that, if she should happen to lose the King, she would find herself without consideration, and perhaps relegated to a convent.

On the other hand, d'Aubenton gave the King to understand that the functions of grand inquisitor did not allow of Cardinal del Giudice to give the necessary attention to the education of the Prince des Asturies, who had need of a man

exclusively engaged in so important a task. The Queen and the confessor acted so efficaciously that the place of tutor to the prince was taken from the cardinal and given to the Duc de Popoli, a Neapolitan, a man of much intelligence, a clever courtier, thoroughly corrupt, with all the exterior graces which, while hiding vice, only render it more dangerous. He was strongly suspected of having poisoned his wife, who belonged to his house, heiress of the elder branch, and whose death left him master of all her property.

A few days after this, the cardinal received the order to no longer come to the council meetings. He then resigned his place as grand inquisitor and, soon after, retired to Rome.

Prince de Cellamare, son of the Duc de Giovenazzo, brother of Cardinal del Giudice, was then Spanish ambassador to France. In the fear of being discredited with the powerful and vindictive Alberoni, he wrote to him, begging him not to confound him with his uncle, and to continue his protection to him with the Queen. Alberoni turned that letter to good account and exhibited it with affectation, saying that the cardinal



must have been guilty of great wrongs since he was abandoned by a nephew so wise and enlightened. This letter only proved the ambition and the baseness of Cellamare.

D'Aubenton saw himself obliged to write to the pope, to exaggerate the rare qualities, even the virtues of Alberoni; but specially his zeal for the Court of Rome and his power in Spain. This last clause was the most decisive to caution the pope against the accusations of Giudice and the other enemies of the minister. D'Aubenton expected that after having contributed to the cardinalship of Alberoni, the latter, having nothing else to look to, would assist him to obtain it for himself. It is thus that this precious hat can put in motion a nation's entire clergy, and sometimes that of Europe. Alberoni, knowing its full value, judged that the purple would protect him in all emergencies, and even his downfall has proven that he was not wrong.

Alberoni, fearing nothing more from the Spaniards near the King, was anxious about the Parmesans whom a curiosity to see the Queen might draw to Madrid, and forgot nothing to

keep them away. The ease with which he had subjugated the Queen made him fear that another might acquire the same influence over the mind of that princess. He saw with much grief the arrival of the Queen's nurse, with a sort of peasant, her husband, and a capuchin son. This sort of people do not ordinarily appear on the scene; but they sometimes place and displace the actors who play the most important rôles. Alberoni had started from too low a rank to have the right not to fear a capuchin, foster-brother to the Queen; fortunately, the latter happened to be a fool; but the nurse, with the coarseness of her original condition, wished to be considered something and succeeded. She was shrewd, clever, and knew how to make use of intrigue and boldness at the proper time; the sequel will prove it.

The Regent, offended at the insolence of Alberoni with regard to de Louville and still more indignant to see to what extent the King of Spain was under the subjection of an audacious minister, flattered himself to draw this prince from his lethargy, by writing him personally. The letter

was strong: the difficulty was to make it reach its destination without Alberoni's knowledge. The Regent requested Father du Trévoux to send it to Father d'Aubenton, who was to deliver it to the King only. D'Aubenton received it; but having already been almost ruined for having done just such a thing for the pope, he took the letter to the minister.

Alberoni felt the effect that the letter might have produced on the King's mind, had he received it without being prepared for it. He consulted with the Queen and began by writing to Monti, who was then in Paris, a letter which he requested him to show to the Regent. In it he said that the King was much displeased with the one which d'Aubenton had delivered, as would be seen by the reply. Then, so as to insult the Regent under the name of others, he vowed infinite respect and attachment to that prince and added that he was in despair at all he heard reported in Madrid by the foreign ministers; namely, that the Regent's sole ambition was to assure to himself the throne of France; that, as soon as his plans were perfected, the person of the King would not be in his

way, and that this was the opinion of all Europe.

Alberoni, in accord with the Queen, managed to suggest to the King a confirmatory reply of the letter written to Monti; and this was no difficult matter.

The continued retirement in which Philip V lived for a long time and his excesses with the Queen had caused him to sink into a condition which out of respect was called vapours, and which soon deserved another name, at least from those of the inner circle.

The Queen and Alberoni took advantage of a favourable moment to speak to him of the Regent's letter, and only had to repeat against that prince what they made the foreigner say in the letter to Monti; that touched the sensitive spot. The Queen added that an enlightened King, as absolute as he was, should not tolerate that a Regent of France undertook to meddle with the government of Spain, and that, to impose silence on him, it would suffice that the King reply that all was done by his orders and that he wished to be master at home.

Nothing so much flatters a weak man and keeps

him better in that state of weakness than the praise bestowed on his firmness. Philip therefore wrote the letter as Alberoni had dictated it to the Queen, who took care to cause to be added to it all possible praise of his minister.

Alberoni, delivered of his anxiety as regards France, busied himself solely with his promotion to the cardinalship. The pope wished to urge Alberoni, by the prospect of the hat, to settle to the advantage of Rome the differences of that Court with that of Spain, fully resolved after that to make use of shift. But Alberoni, too much of a knave himself not to be suspicious of others, was fully determined not to grant anything, unless he were appointed, subject, after that to evade his promises. This contest of distrust and intrigue lasted a long time; but as it is foreign to these memoirs, I shall not dwell upon them.

The Regent saw clearly, by the obsession of the King of Spain, that there was nothing to expect from him, and only thought to conclude with England a treaty which, owing to the misunderstanding of France and Spain, became a necessity.

Abbé Dubois went to meet Stanhope, King

George's minister, at The Hague. The articles were decided between them by the end of November, but it was agreed to keep the treaty secret, so as to give time to the Dutch to come to a decision and consent to it.

During the night from the 1st to the 2nd of February, Chancellor Voisin died suddenly. The Regent having heard of it on arising sent for Attorney-General d'Aguesseau, who was at mass. On his reply that he would go after the service, the Regent was obliged to send him an order to come at once to the Palais-Royal. While these messages were going back and forth, La Rochepot, Vaubourg and Trudaine, State councilors, the first, the son-in-law, and the other two, brothers-in-law of Voisin, brought the casket of the seals. As soon as d'Aguesseau had arrived, the Regent presented him to the crowd which curiosity had attracted to the apartment: "You see," said he, "a new and worthy chancellor." He at once made him enter a coach with him, took him to the Tuileries to present his respects to the King, who, instructed by the Regent, laid his hand on the casket and gave it to d'Aguesseau.

The chancellor returned at once to his residence and entered the apartment of his brother, d'Aguesseau de Valjouan. The latter, a man of much wit and knowledge, but lazy, voluptuous, eccentric, and quite indifferent to all events, was still in his dressing-gown quietly smoking his pipe near the fire. "Brother," said d'Aguesseau to him, "I come to announce a piece of news which will please you; I am chancellor."

"You, chancellor!" said Valjouan coldly, without even moving: "what have you done with the other?"

"He died suddenly and the King has appointed me to succeed him."

"Well! brother, I am very glad of it," continued Valjouan; "I had much rather that it should be you than I," and he continued to smoke his pipe.

On the same day the office of Attorney-General was given to Joly de Fleury, first advocate general. These two selections were the more applauded as no one was in a position to be jealous of them.

I shall not dwell upon the merits of the new

chancellor. His eulogy which I had delivered in my address for the prize of the Académie Française, is in everyone's hands; but in the interest of truth I am obliged to say that he has been accused of excessive partiality for the long robe. He has screened guilty judges from punishment, so as not to bring the bench into disrepute.

The Duc de Grammont, the elder, asking him one day whether there was not a way of cutting down proceedings and reducing expenses: "I have often thought of it," said the chancellor; "I had even begun a regulation on the subject, but I was stopped by the thought of the number of advocates, attorneys and bailiffs whom I was going to ruin." What a reply for a statesman to make!

His taste for science and belles-lettres took up much of his time, to the detriment of his conduct of affairs. He might also be charged with irresolution, acquired, either through having excessively practiced the pro and con at the bar of justice, or through his over abundance of learning, which dazzled him at times instead of enlightening him.

Comte de Céreste-Brancas, soldier councilor of State and friend of the chancellor, told me that



he one day spoke to him of the slowness of his decisions. "When I consider," replied the magistrate, "that a chancellor's decision is a law, I have a right to reflect on it long."

The Regent, after having so well disposed of the office of chancellor and of that of attorney-general, bestowed a multitude of favours which were not so much approved.

Princes would be too happy if they had only to concern themselves with politics and the temporal government of the State. Unfortunately, Church affairs always mingle with them; and as they are usually a tissue of manœuvres, bickerings and intrigues, they cause princes more trouble than the most thorny negotiations with foreign powers. The affair of the constitution was precisely one of those cases; and the Regent, who was working to strengthen peace without, desired tranquillity within the kingdom.

After having placed Cardinal de Noailles at the head of the council of conscience, removed from office Cardinal Bissy and his cabal, driven some Jesuits from Court, exiled from Paris Tellier, Daucin and the other mischief makers of the

society, there was nothing else to do than to allow the Parliaments to act supported by the Sorbonne, the universities, the curates, always respected by the people and the honest bourgeoisie.

The secular and regular societies, the most distinguished in letters and by their establishments, declared themselves loudly in favour of Cardinal de Noailles. Although he had not opposed the destruction of Port-Royal, the hatred against the Jesuits, the opposition to the Court of Rome had brought back to him the Jansenists, among whom there were still some at that time of distinguished reputation.

It would not have cost the Regent much, indifferent as he was on the question of dogma, to display a peaceful neutrality. The pope would have complained, the nuncio would have cried out. Nothing easier than to impose silence on the latter or have him recalled. As to the pope, the Regent could write to him in that tone of respect for his person, with which he could still make him feel the firmness of a mind made up. Clement XI would certainly have supplied the explanations asked for about the bull or it would have im-

perceptibly fallen into oblivion like so many others.

If, through what I have stated, I were suspected of Jansenism, those who did suspect me would be much mistaken. The Jansenists of to-day do not recall to mind the idea of Port-Royal, and it would not be desirable to have them get the upper hand. Whatever may be the constitution at bottom, it is so generally accepted that it must be looked upon as good for the tranquillity of the government. The far-off consequences which the popes might draw from them for their pretensions, would not go into effect. Henceforth the Court of Rome will not risk those acts which a portion of Europe has repelled only by separating itself from the Church. .

The Regent, in trying to conciliate the two parties which divided it, was unable to keep either in check. That of the constitution went so far as to have it declared a rule of faith by a number of prelates. Immediately four bishops of la Sorbonne issued their appeal to the future assembly of prelates and doctors. If Cardinal de Noailles had then caused his to be issued, almost

all the bodies of the kingdom would have followed him. He temporised and lost all advantages.

The Regent, piqued by the sensation of this appeal, at a time when conferences to find compromises were being held at the Palais-Royal, caused orders to be given to the four bishops to retire to their dioceses. Ravachet syndic de Sorbonne was exiled to Saint-Brieuc, but on his way there, he died in Rennes at the Benedictines, where he is buried.

During the war of the constitution, the princes of the blood energetically pushed the one they had declared against the legitimated princes, whom they wanted also to lose the intermediate rank granted by the edict of 1694.

The Regent did not visibly take sides with the princes of the blood: first so as not to offend the Duchesse d'Orléans, his wife, sister of the legitimated; second so as not to appear judge and party in an affair which would be brought to the tribunal of the regency.

The Duchesse du Maine, princess of the blood herself, furious at seeing the rank of her husband

and children attacked, had recourse to all the means which so dear an interest could suggest to her. It seems that she should have directed all her efforts against the request of the princes of the blood, because if that rank were continued to her husband, the demand of the dukes collapsed of its own accord. But as she feared to fail in her defence against the princes, she forgot nothing which might delay the judgment. Besides, if she was grieved at the action of the princes, she considered herself insulted in the claims of the dukes in favour of the fatherland. She therefore thought to raise enemies who might avenge her, by attacking them themselves.

She gave a certain number of nobles to understand that the dukes had made pretensions offensive to the nobility, from which they wished to separate and form among themselves a distinct body. These noblemen easily caught fire, and spread the alarm; their numbers soon increased; everyone hastened to join them; the principals, out of jealousy of the dukes; the others, to show themselves as nobles; there were some among

them whom the bourgeoisie could have claimed as her own.

The Grand Prior de Vendôme persuaded the Knights of Malta who were in Paris, to enter the league. The Bailiff de Mesmes, ambassador of religion and brother to the premier president, co-operated in the wishes of the grand prior and was quietly instigated by the premier president, a great enemy of the dukes, and secretly allied with the Duc and the Duchesse du Maine.

Six of the most prominent members of this confederation presented to the Regent a memorial against the dukes. The Regent received them very coldly, told them he considered such a gathering very bad, refused the memorial, and forbade all Knights of Malta to meet except for matters relating to their order; and a decree from the regency council forbade all associations of noblemen, and the signing of any request in common, under penalty of disobedience.

Several noblemen of the league were not over careful to conceal their anger; Bauffremont said loudly that he wished to destroy the dukes be-

cause he himself was not one. We have since then seen the Marquis de Châtillon, having become duke, wax enthusiastic at that title. In the meantime the princes of the blood continued their action against the legitimated.

The Regent might perhaps have evaded the decision out of consideration for his wife; but the Duchesse du Maine, carried away by passion, caused her husband to take a step which injured him very much. He presumed to tell the Regent that this affair being one of State, could only be judged by a King of age, or even by the States-generals.

The Regent felt what a blow such a pretension struck at his authority: first it is a maxim that the King is always of age, as to justice; second, what had been done without the intervention of the States-generals could be undone without their assistance. Consequently, there was rendered, on the 6th of June, a decree of the regency council which appointed six State coun-tilors to receive the memorials from the princes of the blood and the legitimated respectively and to make a report of them to the council.

The Duchesse du Maine, dismayed at the ill success of her measure, persuaded thirty-nine noblemen that they could stipulate for the body of the nobility, and induced them to present to the Parliament a request asking that an affair which concerned the succession of the crown be referred to the States-generals.

It was at least to the King alone to whom they should have applied had they had mission from the order of nobility. It was besides rather singular to see an order which classes the Parliament in the same rank as the Tiers-Etat, head its request: "To our lords of the Parliament, beg, etc." The premier president and the King's people brought it to the Regent, who caused the six principal noblemen to be sent to the Bastille or to Vincennes.

The Regent at once resolved to have the affair tried by the council. The princes of the blood, the legitimated and the dukes were excluded as interested parties. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, d'Huxelles, Biron and Béringhen took their places. Saint-Contest read the report and on the 1st of July the regency council rendered a



decree in the form of an edict which revokes and declares void that of 1714 and the declaration of 1715, and declares the Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse unqualified to succeed to the crown, deprives them of the rank of princes of the blood, and only leaves to them its honours during their lifetime, in view of the long possession. This edict was registered in the Parliament on the 8th of July.

The honours have since then been continued to the two sons of the Duc du Maine, granted to the Duc de Penthievre, son of the Comte de Toulouse, and have passed on to the Comte de Lamballe, son of the Duc de Penthievre.

In reporting that which concerns the affair of the legitimated, I have specially named the Duchesse du Maine, because she was the soul of the entire affair. The Duc du Maine, in despair at his downfall, but naturally timid, obeyed his wife's every passion. The Comte de Toulouse joined his brother in the defence of their position, but he took part in none of the Duchesse du Maine's intrigues. He had shared his brother's rank without having solicited it; he foresaw its

lack of stability, and appeared neither humiliated nor grieved at the change in his state.

As to the Duchesse du Maine, wild and blind with fury, she only busied herself with projects of vengeance against the Regent, and maintained secret correspondence with that portion of the nobility which she had already excited. We shall soon see her form a badly organised conspiracy which proved fatal to several noblemen and which was almost the undoing of the Duc du Maine.

In the midst of all the affairs with which the Regent was occupied, he was obliged to give his attention to the reception of the Czar, Peter the First, who came to Paris that year.

The rank and personal merit of the Czar require that I give a sort of abridged journal of his arrival and of his sojourn. The Czar reached the Louvre at 9 o'clock at night, and was taken to the Queen's apartment, which was lighted up and furnished superbly. He found it too handsome, asked for a private house and at once re-entered his coach. He was driven to the de Lesdiguière's residence, close to the Arsenal. As its furnishings were no less magnificent, he

saw that he had to make up his mind in the matter. He caused to be taken from a baggage wagon which followed him, a field-bed and had it set up in a closet.

Verton, one of the stewards of the King's residence, was charged with the maintenance morning and evening, for the prince, of a table of forty covers, without counting those of the officers and servants. Marshal de Tessé had command of the entire household and was to accompany the Czar everywhere with a detachment of gardes du corps.

This prince was tall, very well proportioned, rather thin, dark of complexion; his eyes were large and bright, his glance piercing and at times fierce, especially when his face had a sort of convulsive twitch which distorted his entire physiognomy. This habit was the result of poison given him in his childhood, but when he wished to greet someone, his face took on a laughing aspect, and did not lack charm, although he still retained some little sarmatian majesty.

His quick and brusque movements revealed the impetuosity of his character and the violence of



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his passions. Nothing hindered the activity of his mind, and an air of grandeur mingled with audacity announced a prince who felt himself a master everywhere.

The habit of despotism was such that his commands, his wishes, his fancies succeeded one another rapidly and could not bear the least obstacle of time, place or circumstance. Sometimes, importuned by the affluence of spectators, but never embarrassed, he dismissed them with a word, a gesture, or left on the instant to go where his curiosity led him.

If his equipages were not ready, he entered the first carriage he found, were it a public conveyance. He one day took the coach of the Maréchale de Matignon, who had come to see him, and caused himself to be driven to Boulogne; on such occasions Marshal Tessé and the guards ran as best they could to follow him. Two or three such adventures made it necessary after that to always have coaches and horses ready for him.

However little conscious he appeared of the etiquette of his rank, there were occasions when he did not neglect it: he showed sometimes, by

rather fine shades, the distinction of dignities and of persons. Here are some examples :

Although most impatient to see the city, from the moment of his arrival, he refused to leave his apartment until he had received the King's first visit. The day after the Czar's arrival, the Regent called on him. The Czar came out of his study, took a few steps towards the Regent, embraced him, then pointing to the door of the closet with his hand, he immediately turned and walked ahead, followed by the Regent, then by Prince Kurakin, who acted as interpreter. There were two arm-chairs, the first of which was occupied by the Czar; Kurakin remained standing. After a half-hour's conversation, the Czar arose, and stopped where he had received the Regent who, on withdrawing, made a deep bow, to which the Czar replied by a nod.

On Monday, May 10th, the King came to make his call. The Czar came down to the courtyard, received the King at the coach door, and both, walking side by side, the King on the right, entered the apartment where the Czar offered the first arm-chair, giving way in everything.

After being seated a few moments, the Czar arose, took the King in his arms, and embraced him several times, his eyes moist, and with the most marked transports of tenderness. The King, though a child, was not in the least astonished, made a little compliment and submitted to the Czar's caresses with good grace. On leaving, the two princes repeated the same ceremonial as on the arrival. The Czar, while giving the King precedence to the coach, continued to maintain his bearing of equality, and if he permitted himself at moments and perhaps designedly, a sort of superiority which age may give, he was careful to conceal it by his caresses and his demonstrations of affection for the child, whom he took in his arms.

The next day, the 11th, the Czar returned the King's visit. He would have been received at the coach step, but as soon as he perceived under the vestibule of the Tuileries, the King walking towards him, he jumped from the coach, ran to meet the King, took him in his arms, thus mounted the stairs and carried him to the apartment. Everything took place exactly as the evening be-



fore, with the exception of the precedence which the King gave to the Czar.

As soon as he had received the King's visit, the Czar went about Paris incessantly, entering the stores and workshops, stopping before everything which attracted his attention, questioning the artists by means of Kurakin, and everywhere giving evidence of his enlightenment and knowledge. Things of taste and adornment interested him but little; but all that was useful, relating to the navy, commerce, the necessary arts, excited his curiosity, attracted his attention, caused admiration for the wisdom of a mind broad, just and as prompt to learn as it was eager to know. He only glanced at the diamonds of the crown which were displayed before him, but he admired the works of the Gobelin factories, went twice to the Observatory, lingered long at the Jardin des Plantes, examined the machine room and talked with the carpenters who were building the swing-bridge.

One easily imagines that such a prince was not over-particular in his dress. A suit of barracan or broad-cloth, a wide belt from which a sabre

hung, a round wig, without powder, which did not pass the neck, a shirt without cuffs, such was his outfit.

He had ordered a wig. The wigmaker not doubting that he wanted one in fashion which was then to wear them long and thick. The Czar had it clipped all around, to reduce it to the shape of the one he wore.

Madame, mother of the Regent, the Duchesse de Berri, and the Duchesse d'Orléans had expected to receive the visit of the Czar as soon as he had returned the King's, but not hearing anything about the matter, they each sent him their chief equerry to present their compliments. The Czar then went to see them in the order I mentioned, and he was received as the King would have been.

The day he called on Madame, Friday the 14th, the Regent joined him there, and took him to the Opera, in the great box, and both sat alone on the same bench. Towards the middle of the performance, the Czar asked for beer: the Regent had some brought at once, arose, presenting a goblet on a saucer, and then a napkin. The

Czar drank without rising, returned the goblet and the napkin to the Regent, who was still standing, and thanked him by a smile and a nod. He left the Opera at the fourth act to go to supper.

He dined at eleven o'clock and had his supper at eight o'clock. The amount of his expenses was 1,800 livres a day. He was always splendidly served although he had ordered curtailments the very first day. It was not on account of sobriety; he was fond of the table and only wished to suppress its luxury. He ate excessively at dinner and at supper, drank two bottles of wine at each meal, and usually one of liqueur at dessert, without counting the beer and the lemonade which he had between meals. Several of his officers coped with him in this and among them, his almoner, whom he liked and esteemed greatly for that reason. He at times gave himself up to excesses with these men whose consequences were best passed in silence.

The Czar made a private visit to the Regent, but he made none to any member of the royal house, prince or princess, other than the three I

have just named. He had been told that the princes of the blood would call on him, if he promised to go and see the princesses afterwards. He refused with haughtiness this conditional visit, and it was not again mentioned.

If the State visits, the plays and the fêtes interested him but little, it was not the same with things which could improve him. On the same day that he went to the Opera, he had spent the entire morning in the gallery of plans, conducted by Marshal de Villars and followed by the general officers who happened to be in Paris. The marshal also accompanied him to the Invalides, on the 16th, Whitsunday. The Czar asked to see everything there, examine everything and ended by visiting the refectory, where he asked for a drink of the soldiers' wine, drank to their health, treating them as comrades, and slapping the shoulders of those nearest him.

He noticed among the spectators the Maréchale de Villars, whose face was a striking one: he learned who she was and greeted her specially.

Marshal d'Estrées invited him to dine at his house at Issy, Tuesday the 18th, and pleased him

much by the charts and naval plans which he showed him.

The Czar, calling at the Tuileries on the 24th, entered the apartment of Marshal de Villeroi, where the King came as if by chance. All ceremonial was then omitted and the Czar again gave himself up to the liveliest transports of affection. That same evening, he went to Versailles and spent three days visiting the château, the menagerie, Trianon, Marly, and specially the machine, more interesting then than it is to-day that the mechanism is more perfected.

He slept at Trianon, where his officers had brought girls, in Mme. de Maintenon's apartment, an act which Blouin, the favourite's old servant, looked upon as a profanation. These morals were, in fact, in singular contrast with the last years of Louis XIV. It has been claimed that the Czar and his officers had reason to remember the company they had taken with them.

On the 30th of May, he went to dine at Petit-Bourg, with the Duc d'Antin, who on the same day took him to Fontainebleau, where the Comte de Toulouse next day gave him the pleasure of the

chase. On returning, the Czar insisted upon eating alone with his own retinue, on the island of l'Etang. The Comte de Toulouse and the Duc d'Antin must have been grateful to the Czar for having excluded them. The Czar and his retinue had to be carried to their coaches to return to Petit-Bourg, which they reached in a most disgusting condition.

On Tuesday, June 1st, the fumes of the evening before having vanished, the Czar embarked on the Seine to go down to Paris. He stopped at Choisy, where the dowager Princesse de Conti received him. After having visited the gardens, he again entered his gondola, went through Paris, passing under all the bridges, and landed below the Porte de la Conférence.

On the 3rd, he returned to spend a few days at Versailles, at Marly, at Trianon, which he wanted to see more thoroughly. On the 11th, he went to Saint-Cyr, saw all the classes, had the exercises of the pupils explained to him, and then went up to the room of Mme. de Maintenon who, having foreseen the visit, had gone to bed.

The Czar, on entering, drew the curtain of the

windows, then those of the bed, looked at her attentively, and went out without saying a word and without doing her the slightest act of politeness.

Mme. de Maintenon was to say the least astonished at so strange a visit and must have felt the difference of the times.

The day he went to the Sorbonne, he showed more consideration to the statue of Cardinal de Richelieu than he had shown to the person of Mme. de Maintenon.

As soon as he saw the tomb of the cardinal, he ran to embrace the figure of that minister, addressing these words to it: "I would give one-half of my empire to such a man as you that he might aid me in governing the other half."

The Czar went to dine on the 15th, at the Duc d'Antin's. Mme. la duchesse went there with the princesses, her daughters, to see him once at least before his departure. The Duc d'Antin, wishing to satisfy their curiosity, invited the Czar to take a stroll in the garden and led him in front of the ground-floor apartments, where the princesses and

their attendants were at the windows. On approaching them, the Czar was told that Mme. la duchesse was there and of the desire she had to see him. He replied not a word, did not even ask which one she was, walked slowly, looked at them all, bowed to them in general with a nod and passed on.

The Czar, on entering the dining-room, was surprised on seeing under a canopy the portrait of the Czarina which the Duc d'Antin had found some way of procuring. This gallantry pleased him so much that he exclaimed that only Frenchmen could be capable of such an act. He soon experienced another, and a more striking one, which I shall report under its date.

On the 16th, he saw the review of the Maison du Roi. The magnificence of the uniforms seemed to displease him. Without awaiting the end, he left suddenly, and at a gallop, went to Saint-Ouen, where he had supper with the Duc de Tresmes.

The Czar spoke Latin and German with ease; he could have made himself understood in French,



which he knew fairly well, and he was suspected of making use of an interpreter for the sake of dignity.

On the 18th, he received the Regent's last visit and went to take leave of the King, who, the next day, came to say good-bye to him. No ceremonial was observed, but the same effusion and affection were noticeable in the Czar.

On the same day, he witnessed from a gallery of the higher court, the trial of a case. The advocate-general, Lamoignon, to-day chancellor, in summing up, spoke of the honour which the Court received on that day and had it recorded.

In the afternoon, the Czar attended a meeting of the Académie des Sciences, and then another of that of Belles-Lettres, called in special session. These two societies interested him each in its way. He sat at both and requested the academicians to be seated.

The compliment paid him and which I have mentioned before was at the medal Mint. The Czar, after having examined the structure, the strength and the length of stroke of the coining-engine, joined the workmen in setting it in motion.

Nothing could equal his surprise when there appeared from under the stamp a portrait of himself, superior as to resemblance and artistic merit, to all the medals which had been struck for him; he also appeared quite satisfied with the reverse side. It was a figure of Renown passing from North to South, with these words of Virgil: *Vires acquirit eundo*, as an allusion to the knowledge which that prince acquired in his travels.

The Czar accepted from the King two Gobelin tapestries, and refused a sword studded with diamonds. He gave several gold and silver medals representing the principal events of his life and his portrait ornamented with diamonds to Marshals d'Estrées and de Tessé, to the Duc d'Antin and to Verton. • He acquired for the latter, who had him served during his sojourn, a singular friendship and asked the Regent to send him to him as chargé d'affaires of France in Russia. He had sixty thousand livres distributed to the servants who had waited on him. He expressed the greatest desire to form a friendly alliance with us; but as this was not in accord with the new political plan of the Regent, or rather of

Abbé Dubois, he was only answered by vague demonstrations of attachment which had no further result.

The Czar left here the 20th of June to go to Spa, where the Czarina was to meet him. He was much affected on leaving as he spoke of France, and he said that it was with grief that he saw that it would soon be ruined by luxury.

That year an event took place which should serve as an example to those who, abusing a precarious authority, often cause legitimate authority to be hated. The inhabitants of Martinique, vexed by the annoyances of la Varennes, the governor-general, and of Ricouart, the commissary of that island, had often and uselessly forwarded their complaints to the minister of France. Fatigued with waiting for a reply, the islanders met secretly and decided upon a plan of action. They sought out the governor and the commissary and found them dining together. They placed them both on board of a ship bound for France, handed the captain a new memorandum of complaints and protestations of fidelity to the King, made him swear to deliver it faith-

fully, accompanied the vessel twelve leagues at sea, with two well-armed pirogues, to make sure of the departure, and forbade the two deposed vizirs to ever again set foot on the island.

The conduct of the islanders after this expedition was so quiet and submissive, order so well maintained in the colony, that the Court decided to shut its eyes on what had taken place. The two banished ones were obliged to pocket their affront and, what in France is the greatest of punishment, saw themselves the object of mockeries and ridicules which were not spared them.

Several successors of la Varennes and of Ricouart have not much profited by the example. We have just seen, in the case with which Martinique surrendered to the English, how important it is for a government not to render itself odious.

While the inhabitants of Martinique were taking the law into their own hands, those of Périgueux implored that of the Regent against Coursion, commissary of Bordeaux. He was the son of Lamoignon de Basville, the despot of Languedoc, and had been commissary of Rouen. The brigandage of his secretaries and the arrogant

pretension of his demeanour toward them was the cause of his almost being stoned to death at Rouen, where he was first commissary. He was compelled to flee and his father's credit helped him to be appointed commissary of Guienne.

The spirit of despotism which he had inherited from his father, without his capacity, led him to levy taxes on his own personal authority. The town of Périgueux complained and, as a reply, he had the aldermen put in prison. The town sent deputies to the Court to appeal against this act of tyranny; but they were more than two months besieging the office of the Duc de Noailles, without ever being able to go beyond the antechamber. That minister, friend of Courson, wished, by delays, to discourage those unfortunates. Besides, a maxim of tyrants and under-tyrants is to always side with superiors. Fortunately, the Comte de Toulouse, a perfectly honest man, heard about the matter. He informed several members of the regency council about it and specially the Duc de Saint-Simon, sworn enemy of the Duc de Noailles, and who took up everything with the greatest ardour.

The first time that the Duc de Noailles came to report to the regency council, the Duc de Saint-Simon asked him when he expected to settle the Périgueux affair, exposing the case succinctly and very vigorously. The Comte de Toulouse seconded him in that cold and indignant tone which a denial of justice gives an honest man.

Everybody turned their eyes towards the Duc de Noailles, who said stammeringly that the affair required careful examination and that more important matters had prevented him from attending to it. The Comte de Toulouse and Saint-Simon retorted that there was nothing more important than to clear up charges true or false which for the past three months kept some citizens in irons.

The Regent therefore ordered the Duc de Noailles to report on the matter within a week. Noailles came to the council a week after with a bag full of papers. Saint-Simon asked him if the Périgueux case was in it; Noailles replied ill-humouredly that it was ready, that it would come in its turn, and began by reading another, then still another. At the end of each report Saint-

Simon always asked: "And the Périgueux case?" It was Opera day and the Regent always went there on leaving the council; and Noailles had flattered himself to amuse the council until the hour of the performance and perhaps finally to cause Périgueux to be forgotten. At last, the hour of the Opera having come, Noailles said that the affair in question was all that was left, but that the report on it would be so long that he did not wish to deprive M. le Regent of his recreation and he began to gather up his papers. Saint-Simon, stopping his arm, addressed the Regent and asked him if he cared so much for the Opera, and if he did not prefer to render justice to unfortunates who implored it. The Regent resumed his seat and consented to hear the report.

Noailles therefore began it, with concentrated fury, but Saint-Simon, who was at his side, had his eyes on all the documents, re-read them after Noailles, and, followed the report with the most open and insulting distrust. The affair was so outrageous that Noailles himself asked for the freedom of the prisoners, but he tried to excuse Courson and dwell on the services of Basville, his

father. The petulant Saint-Simon interrupted him, saying that not the father's merit but the son's iniquity was in question, and, in conclusion added that the prisoners should be indemnified at the expense of Courson, that the latter should be driven out of the commissariat, and that he should be punished in so signal a manner, that his case would be an example for those like him. The Regent said that he would take care of the indemnity, that he would rate Courson soundly, although he deserved worse, but that the father merited some consideration; that however he annulled Courson's ordinances with a warning not to repeat the same offence. Saint-Simon asked that the decision be written at once, "not daring," he said, "to trust to the memory of the Duc de Noailles"; and the Regent so ordered. Noailles, trembling with fury, could barely hold the pen; Saint-Simon, to assist him, began to dictate. When Noailles came to the annulment of the ordinances with warning not to repeat the same offence, he stopped: "Continue," said Saint-Simon; "such is the decree." Noailles looked around at the council to see if there was no miti-



gation. Saint-Simon put the question to the entire council, which was unanimous in its decision; thus ended the Périgueux affair.

Shortly after, Courson was recalled, and said, as is usual in such cases, that he had asked for his recall. If that is true, the province showed its gratitude by bonfires. This did not hinder him from later having a place of councilor in the royal council of finances.

Although this is only a special affair, I thought it well to report it, so as to give an idea of the trickery of the ministers, of the annoyances that are committed in the King's name, of the impunity of which they are assured, except in unique circumstances, such as the chance which brought the matter to the ears of the Comte de Toulouse, whose sense of equity was aroused by the resentment of the Duc de Saint-Simon. Besides this, one can still see, by Courson's fortune, that those who have a name in their class succeed much in the same manner, merit or no merit.

I have forgotten to say that Chancellor d'Aguesseau, although just, was the only one of the council who tried to lighten the decree, because

men of the long robe always make common cause when they have no contrary interest, and they fear to weaken the respect for the magistracy. That year he secured nobility to the councilors of the great council, with exemption of the lord's due for estates held from the King.

Speaking of consideration for the magistracy, the Regent last year, had had a mind to take part in the mid-August procession, for the vow of Louis XIII. The Parliament claimed to have the right side, alleging that Gaston had only walked on the left in a similar ceremony, during the minority of Louis XIV, although Gaston was son of France, and at that time lieutenant-general of the Kingdom. The Regent, without discussing the matter, abstained from the procession. This year, the same desire took possession of him, and he announced that he would precede the Parliament, basing this on the example of the Duc de Montpensier, who had preceded it at the procession of Sainte-Geneviève on the 10th September, 1570. The Parliament opposed to this that the Duc de Montpensier had only had the precedence in virtue of a warrant of the King and to represent

the clauses were not difficult of settlement, so the registration had to be done. Besides schisms occurred in the Parliament with regard to the nomination of commissaries. The commissions were beginning to suspect that the premier president was a double-faced scoundrel. In truth, the premier president had already twice received his *brevet de retenue* of five hundred thousand livres and yet did not consider that he was sufficiently paid; we shall later see that he was right.

While the Regent strove to preserve the peace with our neighbours, he saw with anxiety the war preparations which Spain was making. Alberoni, having settled the differences between his master and the pope, from whom he drew an indult to place an assessment on the clergy of Spain, had prepared a considerable armament and led the pope to understand that it was to oppose the undertakings that the Turks might attempt on Italy. Clement XI, in recognition of so many services, gave him at last, although with much repugnance, the hat. The Sacred college complained a great deal, the pope himself wept, but Alberoni was cardinal and then said to his intimates that "hav-

ing nothing to look to for himself, he was now going to work for the King's glory."

Alberoni's plan was, he said: first to save the honour of the King of Spain; second, to maintain the peace of Italy; third, to assure to the sons of the Queen of Spain the successions of Tuscany and of Parma and to obtain for the King of Spain, Naples, Sicily, and the ports of Tuscany; fourth, to divide the state of Mantua, by giving the city and a part of the country to the Venetians, the other part to the Duc de Guastalla; fifth, the Milanese and Monferrat to the Emperor; sixth, Sardinia to King Victor, to compensate him for Sicily; seventh, restore Commachio to the pope; and eighth, divide the Catholic lowlands between France and Holland.

Alberoni, to establish in time to come an equilibrium and a lasting peace, began by lighting a fire, without having the means nor the necessary strength to execute his projects. Such is that Alberoni whom some have tried to show as a great man, a title too readily bestowed on extraordinary men, and which they only owe to those who should have the greatest reason for

discrediting them — to writers born of the middle class, who are the victims, and bear the burden of all great enterprises.

The great man is the one who, for objects great and useful, proportions the means to the enterprises, the crowns by the success, and can congratulate himself on the events, since he has foreseen them, prepared them and brought them about. Even those who are called great geniuses can raise or destroy great States, but they are not always the best fitted for administration. They make unfortunates and to crown all, they excite the emulation of mediocre successors who only cause disasters.

Alberoni, born in the dust, rises by his intellect, and reaches one of the highest dignities. That is not the act of a common man. But he leads his master into a ruinous war, places him in a position to make a forced peace and finally has himself expelled to go to Rome and live in opulence and contempt. He came very near being degraded, and only avoided it by the interest which cardinals have in rendering the purple invulner-

able even in those who disgrace it. These are the facts. Let the reader judge.

As soon as the Spanish fleet reached Sardinia, all the powers were set in motion; each suspected the others of being in league with Spain. The Emperor, proud of his victories in Hungary, reproached the pope with having granted an indult to the King of Spain on the pretext of arming against the Turk, and of seeing these armies used against Christians. He threatened Clement XI to at once carry war into Italy. The pope, frightened, wept bitterly and said in his grief "that he had damned himself by giving the hat to Alberoni"; to which Cardinal del Giudice replied "that he would do himself the honour of following His Holiness everywhere, except in hell."

England was at that time divided in its interior into two opposing parties. The misunderstanding between King George and the Prince of Wales, his son, had become an open hatred. The King, in reviewing his troops, had refused to pass in front of his son's regiment, unless that prince

withdrew, and he had even just banished him to the village of Richmond, near London. George was incensed to have as a successor a prince whom he did not look upon as his son. No one was ignorant of what had taken place at Hanover before George had received the crown of England. That prince, suspecting a criminal intercourse between his wife and the Comte de Konigsmark, had had the latter thrown into a lime-kiln, and had kept the Electress imprisoned in a château. The birth of the Prince of Wales had always been suspicious to King George, who could never bear him.

Alberoni, in real or apparent security with regard to the foreign powers, had a sudden alarm in Spain. The King became dangerously ill. The Queen and Alberoni kept that prince practically as a prisoner. Almost all the officers of the palace, reduced to titles without functions, only saw the prince at moments, at his meals or at chapel. Two gentlemen of the chamber, one of whom was even majordomo to the Queen, and a few absolutely necessary servants, took charge of the entire service.

The Queen's nurse entered the room alone to put on his shoes, at the moment the King arose, and caused Alberoni great jealousy; but there was no way of excluding her and it was dangerous to attempt it.

The King's ailment compelled the calling of the head physician and the other health officers. The right and the duty of the chief majordomo was to be present during the preparing and administering of all remedies; the Marquis de Villena, Duc d'Escalone, wishing to perform that duty, came into the room and near the King's bed. Alberoni, piqued, forbade the usher to allow Villena to enter. The latter having presented himself, the usher partly opened the door, and told him of the order he had received. Villena calls him an insolent fellow, pushes the door, enters, and advances towards the bed of the King, who was too ill to notice anything. The Queen and Alberoni were at the head of the bed and the officers on duty were at a distance. Alberoni seeing the marquis advance, wished to have him leave and took him by the arm to turn him back. Villena, who was very gouty, while struggling against



the cardinal, fell in an arm-chair, but seizing Alberoni by the sleeve, he gave him a number of blows about the shoulders and ears with his cane, calling him a priestling, a little puppy to whom he would teach the respect which he owed him.

Alberoni, stunned at such treatment administered to a cardinal, and perhaps through a feeling of his low origin, only thought of getting rid of the hands of the angry marquis and took refuge near the bed, without the Queen, out of dignity, and the servants, out of secret pleasure, having moved to assist him. After this affair, one of the valets came to help Villena to arise from the arm-chair and leave the room. The King did not notice this scene at all. Hardly had the marquis returned home when he received orders to betake himself to one of his estates. The cardinal dared not have recourse to censure, fearing to make the adventure public, which it nevertheless became. A few months after Villena was recalled, refused all the cardinal's advances and always treated him haughtily.

The King became so ill that the Queen had him draw up a will by which she was probably ap-

pointed regent, but its particulars have never been known. Six Spanish grandees certified and signed the will, without however seeing anything of its contents except the signature of the King. This prince's health was restored, but, although he lived nearly thirty years after that (he only died in 1746), his mind remained quite weak. If I continue these memoirs until his death, I shall give singular proof of this drawn from the correspondence of our ministers at Madrid.

Alberoni, hated by the people and despised by the nobles, as much as a powerful minister can well be, did not exhibit less assurance in the eyes of all the foreign powers. The Nuncio Aldovandri, having received a brief from the pope which revoked the indult, was unable to transmit it to the King, who was always locked up, and he delivered it to the minister, who paid no attention to it, and pretended, out of derision, no doubt, that the pope should be much obliged to him for having had the constitution accepted by the bishops of Spain.

Clement XI, who would have been flattered at such acceptance on the part of France, considered

it rash in Spain. The Court of Rome maintained that its bulls should be received by the Spanish bishops *provoluti ud pedes*.

On the other hand, the Emperor, still treating the pope with haughtiness, asked him and even ordered him to recall Nuncio Aldovandri, to summon Alberoni to Rome or that he be tried in Spain.

Alberoni was not in the least affected, promising the pope to soon avenge him of the Emperor and asking, in the meantime, a permission to reside at Malaga, of which he had just been given the bishopric worth ten thousand livres. The pope, knowing that that permission would be a new grievance with the Emperor, refused it in appearance; but not daring to offend Alberoni, he sent him word by Father d'Aubenton that he granted him the permission for six months of the year, and that the council of prelates giving him six other months, he would thus have a perpetual licence to reside.

In the meantime all the powers of Europe were stirring. Never had negotiations been more active, more variable, nor interests more complicated.

We shall see what were the results after having reported some of the special events of that year.

The King, having reached his seventh year on February 15th, passed into the hands of men. It would be desirable that princes be turned over to them from their birth. It is the duty of women to nurse them, and of men to bring them up, specially when Montandiers, Beauvilliers, Bossuets or Fénelons are chosen. Their equals will be found, will be created, when the public voice is consulted. It is a justice to be rendered to Louis XIV: he has often regulated his choice on renown. Louvois could never set aside Turenne.

On the occasion of the change from women to men, the first gentlemen claimed their ancient rights of sleeping in the King's chamber. The first valets de chambre pleaded the long possession in which they were; and the Regent, wishing to humour everybody, referred the decision to the majority, all things remaining in suspense, and they have continued the same since. It is thus that through neglect and non-usage, several officers of the Court are other than they were originally. It is in the same way that the master

of the horse lost his case against the head of the *petite écurie*, who had become successively almost his equal, and has maintained himself in independence.

The Prince Elector of Saxony, to-day King of Poland, became or declared himself a Catholic that year, so as to prepare his succession to his father's throne. When the latter had become a Catholic, the Electress, his wife, a zealous Protestant, would no longer have any intercourse with her husband, nor receive the honours of a Queen.

The Chevalier d'Oppède, nephew of Cardinal Janson, died that year. Having no other possession than his face, he had married, out of necessity, the Marquise d'Argenton, mistress of the Regent and mother of Chevalier d'Orléans, and for honour's sake kept his marriage secret. I report a fact of so little importance only to show that people still wished to contract proper marriages: By this I do not mean to condemn marriages disproportionate either on account of birth or fortune, but justified by merit.

Massillon, priest of the Oratory, renowned for his sermons, and specially for his *Petit-Carême*,

without any other protection than his merit, was appointed to the bishopric of Clermont. He would not have been in a position to accept had not Crozat, the younger, paid the bulls.

The Duchesse de Berri took among her ladies the Marquise d'Arpajon, daughter of Le Bas de Montargis, treasurer extraordinary of the wars, and mother of the Comtesse de Noailles of to-day. With a face both beautiful and noble, she was still more distinguished for her virtue and her piety. It was by her and the Marquise de la Rochefoucauld, daughter of the financier Prondre, that the Duchesse de Berri was accompanied to the Carmelites, to whom she used to say: "I bring you my three bourgeois."

It is claimed that the eye trouble which the Regent had about this time was due to the blow of a fan which he had received from the Marquise d'Arpajon, with whom he had attempted to take liberties. These two women were more in their spheres at the Carmelites than they would have been at the suppers which the princess took with the Regent's *roués*, and from which they had the honour of being excluded.

The Duchesse de Berri created the place of master of the wardrobe, which she gave to a Marquis de Bonnivet, bastard of Gouffier and a great fighter. She was very glad, she said, to have a handy man about the house; which did not seem quite the proper piece of furniture for the first princess of France.

I shall report the matters concerning this princess as the occasions offer. Should one wish to tell all relating to her, the narrative would be too long drawn out.

Louise Adelaide d'Orléans, her younger sister, took the veil in the Abbey of Chelles, the 30th of March. That princess, with beauty and much wit, was rather excitable. Her mother feared the consequences and contributed not a little to her daughter's vocation. Her seclusion determined her to give herself up to chemistry, anatomy, and to the study of natural history. She had the greatest facility for all she wished to learn, and found many ways of not being bored. She wrote a letter which she signed *wife of Jesus Christ*, at which the prince said that he thought himself on bad terms with his son-in-law, a jest more worthy of a

libertine than of a philosopher, and out of place in a man whose every word was noted.

The chancellors having had until then no other quarters than their own homes, the Regent assigned to the Chancellery the house of the place Vendôme which formed a part of the assize of Bourvalais.

The Regent also purchased for the crown the largest and most perfect diamond to be found in Europe. It is called the Regent, and sometimes the Pitt, the name of the seller, brother-in-law of Stanhope, England's secretary of state, and uncle of the celebrated Pitt of to-day. Four millions was asked for it, but owing to lack of purchasers, it was sold for two, including the chips which came from the cutting. It weighs 600 grains. Pitt had acquired it from a workman of the Mogul mines.

Among those employed in the mines, are free men who sometimes spend years there; but when they wish to leave, those in charge take the precaution to purge them and give them an injection to make them cast out what they might have swallowed and hidden about their bodies. The work-



man in question had resorted to the last method, but as soon as he had hidden his booty, he made an incision in his thigh, as if he had fallen on a sharp stone. He then called for help; the quantity of blood with which he was covered caused him to be carried out, without the usual precaution being taken. He was clever enough to take the diamond and hide it during the little time he was allowed to rest, after his wound had been dressed. He later pretended to be unfit to work, asked for the money due him, so as not to reveal his fortune, and found a way to get to Europe.

To make what is to follow more clear, let us begin by giving an idea of the different interests which put the actors in motion.

The Duc and the Duchesse du Maine, in despair at the loss of their suit against the princes of the blood, worked quietly to foment trouble; they carried on a correspondence in Spain and sought to make friends in the Parliament whose premier president was entirely devoted to them. Besides, the Parliament, which had flattered itself of having a part in the administration, took every oppor-

tunity to make remonstrances, and the Regent often supplied cause.

Marshal de Villeroi and all the old Court forgot nothing to discredit him with the public. In this matter the marshal affected proceedings as improper as they were ridiculous, but which impressed the people. He kept under lock and key the linen and the bread of the King, delivered with childish ostentation the most ordinary things of the service, and sought to have people notice his precautions as to the prince's wine. Fools admired; the ill-disposed applauded; sensible people laughed with contempt and felt that if there had been danger, the meats, the drinks and thousand other means of crime would have rendered useless the laughable precautions of the tutor.

He had the title of chief of the council of finances, and he was incapable of understanding anything about these; he was only the more jealous of the Duc de Noailles who, although only the president, was nevertheless the master of all the administration. The latter, in turn, saw with sorrow the credit which Law was acquiring with the Regent.

This competition in the financial department was an obstacle to the desire which Noailles always had to become prime minister. Abbé Dubois, who from far off aimed at the same office, secretly supported Law, from whom he drew much money. Without stopping to discuss the nature of the system, I shall simply remark that, in view of the Regent's character, Law pleased him by his intelligence, and specially by his extraordinary ideas. But for the same reason the latter displeased the chancellor who beside was friendly to the Duc de Noailles. The Regent, finding them always opposed to his new projects, one through interest, the other through integrity, was disgusted with them. The chancellor might be reproached for his irresolution, but the most annoying thing about him was his virtue.

However that may be, the remonstrances of the Parliament of the 26th January were so powerful, and the chancellor so weak, either through a sentiment of equity, or through his usual consideration for the magistracy, that the Regent resolved to take away the seals from him and give them to d'Argenson, then lieutenant of police; and the

chancellor received an order to withdraw to Fresne. The Duc de Noailles, on learning of the chancellor's disgrace, did not doubt that his own was impending, and came at once to tender his resignation from the finance department, whose administration was given to d'Argenson at the same time as the seals.

The State did not gain in this change which favoured the unfortunate Law system; but Paris lost the best lieutenant of police it had ever had. D'Argenson, with a frightful face which impressed the populace, had a mind, broad, clear and penetrating; was firm and possessed all sorts of courage. He forestalled or quieted more disorders through the fear which he inspired than through punishment. Many families have owed to him the preservation of their honour and of the fortune of their children which would have been irretrievably lost with the King, had not this magistrate hushed many a youthful prank.

Fontenelle has perfectly described the plan of the Paris police and d'Argenson has carried it out to its fullest extent; but as his fortune was always his principal object, he was more fiscal than a

magistrate should be. Machault succeeded him in the place of lieutenant of police and did it with greater integrity than intelligence.

The Regent, to console the Duc de Noailles for the loss of the finance department, placed him in the regency council and gave to the son, aged five years, the reversion of the offices of the father.

The ease which the Regent had of granting all to those who importuned him, induced the Duc de Lorraine, his brother-in-law, to come to France incognito under the name of Comte de Blamont. As to the Duchesse de Lorraine, she appeared always under her title of *petite-fille de France*, of which the rank was decided. They were given all possible entertainment during their two months of sojourn, but the Duc de Lorraine had a more important object than that of amusement. He desired a ward in Champagne and the title of Royal Highness.

On the first matter, he was trying to revive old pretensions which had been rejected and reduced to nothing by the last treaties. He based the second on the claim that the Duke of Savoy, likewise brother-in-law to the Regent, had had the

title of Royal Highness, which his wife, *petite-fille de France* and Royal Highness herself, had passed to him, which was not exactly the truth. Victor-Amédée, before having obtained the title of King in 1713, had long been married and Duke of Savoy, without having shared his wife's title. To do so, he revived that of King of Cyprus, obtained in Rome the royal hall for his ambassadors, and at Vienna the treatment of those of crowned-heads, and the same consideration successively at all Courts. This secured, gave him the personal title of Royal Highness, but what contributed most to this was the importance of his States, that of his alliance and his influence in the affairs of Italy.

The Duc de Lorraine alleged his pretended title of King of Jerusalem, but his power was of little account, and he had in common with the Duke of Savoy only the chimerical title of King and having married a *petite-fille de France*. The fondness of Madame for all that was of Germany, decided all.

Saint-Contest, who, under a plain and coarse exterior, was the shrewdest man, the cleverest courtier, was charged with reporting to the regency

council the affair relating to the pretensions of the Duc de Lorraine in Champagne. As he had long been commissary at Metz, no one was in a better position to know the inconveniences of what was about to be granted, and consequently to disguise them in his report. He made it as it was wanted, and the affair was passed unanimously in Parliament, which registered it without the least objection. The Duc de Lorraine won superiority over the princes of the blood who formerly would not have consented to equality. The union of Lorraine and France has obviated the subsequent troubles which this decision might have caused, but this could not be foreseen at that time.

The Grand-Duke of Tuscany, son-in-law of Gaston, and whose house has given two queens to France, from one of whom the reigning branch is descended, was not long in asking the Royal Highness rank. The Duke of Holstein-Gottorp made the same request, but both were refused. Shortly after, the Regent granted the honours of Majesty to the King of Denmark, and the title of high powers to the States-general of Holland.

The entry of the Duc de Noailles to the regency

council inspired the other chiefs with a desire to enter it, and they obtained the privilege without losing their other places. Finally there were as many as thirty members in it. It is true that this gave them but little share in the government. Abbé Dubois gradually secured all the secrets of foreign affairs, and those of finance were attended to solely by Argenson and Law, which did not prevent each member from drawing the emoluments of these idle titles.

D'Argenson asked for the *tabouret* for his wife and obtained it. She was the first who secured it on the claim of wife of keeper of the seals.

Times of usurpation at Court lead necessarily to bickerings, which often take the place of more important affairs. Marshal de Villars, as chief of the council of war, wrote a circular letter to the colonels. No one would have dared during the life of the late King, to complain of the tone of the State secretaries.

Marquis de Bauffremont took it upon himself to find it improper on the part of a marshal of France, and replied by so insolent a letter that he was sent to the Bastille, and the marshals of



France asked besides that he apologise to Marshal Villars. The Regent, who saw the women and all the young people take sides with Bauffremont, feared to offend so respectable a body, and contented himself with summoning the young man to the presence of the marshal and to say to the latter that Bauffremont had not intended to offend him, so that Bauffremont, not opening his mouth, the Regent alone made apologies.

Poirier, who had succeeded Fagon in his place of first physician, the only one to be lost on the death of Kings, having died, the Regent declared that he did not wish to meddle with the selection of a successor, but that he excluded Chirac because he was his own physician, and Boudin for the insolent statements he had made against him, Duc d'Orléans, on the death of the Duc de Bourgogne and on that of the other princes. The place was given to Dodart, a man of intelligence, merit and virtue, who has left two sons worthy of him. One is to-day commissary at Bourges, the other serves with distinction in the carabineers.

On Holy-Thursday, the grand almoner being absent, Cardinal de Polignac, at mass, claimed that

it was his duty to hold the gospels for the King to kiss in preference to the first almoner. The edifying dispute prevented the King from kissing the gospel and the matter was later decided in favour of the first almoner.

Abbé de Saint-Pierre, first almoner to Madame, having published his book "Polysynodie," in which he boasted of the advantages of the plurality of councils, the enemies of the regency tried to see in the work a satire on the government of Louis XIV, and attempted to mortify the Regent in an officer of his household. But being unable to do anything legal against Abbé de Saint-Pierre, they plotted in the Académie Française of which he was a member and had him excluded. He did not continue less the friend of scholarly academicians who maintained that his place would not be filled until his death.

A very important affair was at that time promptly settled because it was well handled. There were three archbishops, twelve bishops and a number of abbés to whom the pope refused bulls if they did not submit to certain conditions contrary to our liberties. A few of the prelates named

did not object too much, but others, more French, complained against this servitude. The Regent forbade Cardinal de la Trémouille, our ambassador at Rome, to receive any of these bulls unless all were given, and at the same time named a commission taken from the regency council to resolve on the means of doing without the pope, in case of stubbornness on his part. Hennequin, Petitpied and Legros, doctors of the Sorbonne, supplied to the commissaries some instructive memorials on the matter, but the commission had no occasion to work. Hardly had Rome heard of the affair when it was filled with consternation. The pope sent a messenger immediately, who brought all the bulls. Blank ones would have been sent had they been asked for.

The negotiations regarding the differences between the Emperor and Spain continued that year with the greatest animation. The Emperor did not wish to give up any of his pretensions on several States of the Spanish succession. Alberoni, flattering himself to recover all that had belonged to the Spanish branch of the House of Austria, referred to the Emperor in all his manifestos, only

as archduke. Alberoni put into his measures a haughtiness which was not of a common soul and which led each one of the powers to believe that that minister might be sure of all the others.

Alberoni wanted as preliminaries: first, that the Emperor make an absolute renunciation of all the States of which Philip V was actually possessor; second, that the houses of Médicis and of Farnèse having died out, the children of the Queen, heiress of these two houses, should succeed to them. He expected finally to drive out all the Germans from Italy and was making the greatest preparations for war.

The Duchesse de Saint-Pierre, who was appointed to the Queen of Spain by Alberoni, told me that he had assured her that he only made war to obey Philip V; but he certainly deceives: Philip was not in a condition to have a will of his own. Constantly frightened by the image of death, he confessed every moment, and Father d'Aubenton, always near the prince's bed, left him only when he was asleep. Besides, Alberoni displayed the most absolute authority and declared to the State

secretaries that if they deviated from his orders, they would pay for it with their heads.

Conditions have so changed, the state of Europe is so different to-day, that the details of the negotiations of those times would now interest no one; but the intrigues, the artifices of ministers, the trickery of Courts being of all places and times, one can, by describing what has occurred, give an idea of what takes place daily.

Alberoni having had himself appointed Archbishop of Séville, the pope dared not give him any bulls, in the fear of irritating the Emperor more and more; and Alberoni, unable to obtain them, took possession and enjoyed at the same time, the revenues of the churches of Séville and of Malaga.

The pontiff threatened him with ecclesiastical censures. Alberoni affecting a hypocritical sensitiveness at these threats, replied that he thought the Holy-Father too prudent to undertake against the absolute minister of a great monarchy what he dared not do against Cardinal de Noailles, head of a handful of heretics.

However, he had the fleet leave Spain, and it

arrived in Sicily. The Marquis de Lede, who commanded it, took possession of the château of Palermo; but as the outcome of the operations did not respond to Alberoni's impetuosity, and as Lede excused himself on the necessity of sparing the soldier, Alberoni humanely wrote to him that soldiers are made to die when required.

The lack of deference of this minister for the mediation of the different powers caused the conclusion of the treaty of the quadruple alliance between France, the Emperor, England and Holland. Alberoni, furious against the Regent, sought by all possible means to excite trouble in France and to profit by the dissatisfaction of the Parliament.

The excitement there was very great, and an edict of the month of May, on the currency, very detrimental to the public, increased it still more. The Parliament having made remonstrances without success, forbade by a decree the execution of the edict. The regency council broke the Parliament's decree as an attack on royal authority, but that did not win it more respect. The Parliament sent for the mayor, the six trade bodies and the principal bankers to have them render an account

of the state of the city's revenues and of the inconveniences of the edict on the currency, and wanted to go into all the departments of the administration.

The public, who think they see protectors in magistrates, applauded their measures; excitement was gaining on all minds, and a circumstance, more important than it seems, contributed to it. The memoirs of Cardinal de Retz had just appeared. Everyone read them with avidity; the majority, possessed by a spirit of liberty, flattered themselves with seeing a renewal of the Fronde and to play a part in it. The Parliament, whose proceedings are not always so regular as its complaints are just, sought to dictate to the Regent.

The ancient Court of Inquiry being revived, asked as during the ministry of Louis XIV, the annexation of the other superior courts. The latter excused themselves and contented themselves with making remonstrances. The Parliament redoubled its own and omitted nothing to inflame the public mind; but the nation's spirit was no longer the same. An absolute reign of seventy-two years had bent two or three generations to

obedience and fear. The most ruinous edicts only produced murmurs and songs.

Yet the Regent was not at ease; the French people is one that a single instant can either regenerate or corrupt, and the dissolute life of the Regent injured him more than he imagined. His affectation of impiety excited the contempt of the wise, the indignation of religious men, and accredited the imputation of the crimes of which he was believed capable.

The profusion of favours to courtiers embittered the misery of the people and did not win for him the gratitude of anyone; his bounties were attributed only to weakness and to fear when they were seen bestowed equally on friends and foes. The majority of his intimates, such as d'Effiat, Canillac, Bezons, Huxelles, had long been friendly with the Duc du Maine.

A habit of respect for the wishes of the late King and the disorder of affairs made people regret that the provisions of the will had not been carried out. Fear was entertained for the life of the young King; it would have been considered safer in the hands of a prince not so nearly allied



to the crown as was the Regent, and his imprudences authorised the slanders fomented by the partisans of the old Court. The public applauded the undertakings of the Parliament, which they considered as just and necessary in the circumstances in which the State found itself.

Premier President de Mesmes strove only to maintain his position between his assembly and the Regent from whom he received prodigious sums of money which he spent with a magnificence which always produces consideration. The Regent knew him well, but he counted upon controlling him by dint of money, and that it would only be a question of price.

He supposed also that that magistrate could also hold back or push his assembly forward, in which matter he was mistaken. Mathieu Molé, with the best intentions known and the respect due to his virtue, was unable to moderate the mass of the Parliament during the Fronde. Therefore it happened that de Mesmes was deserted by the commissions every time he undertook to rule them. He then took advantage of this to draw new sums from the Regent, and only brought back

the fugitives by participating in their excesses.

The Regent must have known that one is never sure of those who sell themselves, and that the premier president had been for all time devoted to the Duc du Maine by both taste and interest. Indeed, in the desire which the Parliament showed to share the royal authority, it must have preferred to the Regent the Duc du Maine who, not having the same rights of birth, would be at the head of the government only a member or an instrument of the body which had elevated him. What the Regent had already lost of his authority caused his enemies to believe that he could be totally stripped of it; and those who should have been attached to him made arrangements accordingly, well determined to follow fortune.

The dissatisfaction of the capital was gaining in the provinces. The Parliament of Rennes had openly declared itself in favour of that of Paris. The *Etats* of Brittany which were being held then, were very stormy, and the estrangement of minds had tended that way since the preceding year.

Marshal de Montesquiou, governor in Brittany, in holding the *Etats* at Dinan, began rather

badly with the nobility. Four or five hundred noblemen went to meet him at some distance from the city. They offered themselves as a cortege, not doubting but that he would mount his horse and ride into the city at their head. He contented himself with saluting them from his chaise and continued on his way without offering the slightest excuse. They were shocked, and with reason, at this first reception. The following day he did as badly. The committee of the three orders having gone on foot to invite him to accompany them to the opening of the *Etats*, instead of walking at their head, he entered his sedan-chair, leaving the committee to follow him as they had come. From that moment both sides resorted to disagreeable behaviour.

The day after the opening of the *Etats*, the request of the free gift is made by the commissary in presence of the commander and of the other King's commissaries; after which they withdraw to allow the *Etats* to deliberate on the subject. Formerly, before answering the request, the *Etats* examined the state of their funds and sometimes contested lengthily on the apportionment of the sum. It

happened, under governorship of the Duc de Chaulnes and in the prosperous days of France, that the *Etats*, carried away by their zeal, granted the free gift by acclamation and without deliberation. This example was imitated in the succeeding *Etats* and became a usage which continued until 1717. Then the *Etats*, exhausted by the efforts they had made during the war and already disaffected by Marshal de Montesquiou, wished, before granting anything, to examine the state of their affairs. The marshal was offended at this, and for a few days strove to bring the *Etats* to acclamation and, being unsuccessful in his efforts, he broke up the Assembly.

Several noblemen of the *Etats* and Parliament were exiled, which did not pacify the minds of the others.

However the *Etats* were re-assembled in 1718, and a middle course was taken which was that the *Etats* were to deliberate on the free gift during the sitting in which it was called, and that nothing else could be considered until it was granted. This procedure exists to this day.

If the *Etats* of 1718 were not broken up, they

were hardly more tranquil; the attorney-general syndic was exiled and minds were more estranged than ever. We shall see the outcome of this.

The Parliament of Paris, proud of its success, excited by the public cry, and calculating its efforts on the weakness of the Regent, thought that nothing could hinder it, and rendered the celebrated edict of the 12th of August, by which it stopped all operations of the Bank and forbade all foreigners, even naturalised, to meddle in the administration of the royal money, etc.

Not content with having rendered this edict, the Parliament sent the King's people to ask of the Regent an account of the bills which had passed at the Chamber of Justice, at the Compagnie d'Occident or at the Mint. The Parliament put off for a few days the publication of its decree because it wished secretly to investigate Law's suit. Commissaries, appointed by the judge, had already heard the witnesses, and no less was proposed than to arrest the culprit, end his trial within two hours, hang him in the courtyard of the palace, with the gates closed, and to open them then to exhibit the corpse to the public.

The decree and the project of the Parliament were revealed to the Regent. It is claimed that this was done by President Dadun who, since, has been controller-general. However that may be, the Regent was informed of it, and when the King's people came, on August 22, to submit to him the proposition with which they were charged with regard to the State bills, he contented himself with listening to them and without replying, re-entered his closet. This cold and contemptuous silence disconcerted them more than a sharp reply.

On the report of the matter made to the Parliament, some suspected that the Regent contemplated a vigorous course, such as having the leaders of the uprising seized, or the holding of a bed of justice. Others maintained that the prince would dare do neither one thing nor the other in the midst of a discontented people.

The Regent, incensed at the undertakings of the Parliament, had as yet no fixed project. Several of those who surrounded him, friends of the premier president, kept the Regent in fear of the magistracy, and Marshal de Villeroi sought only

to render him odious in the eyes of the public. The Duc de Noailles, deprived of the finances by the keeper of the seals and by Law, desired the ruin of both. On the other hand, the Duc de Saint-Simon, full of furious contempt for the long robe, saw only with anger the Regent's consideration for the Parliament, and spoke of it as of an assembly of the bourgeois which the least act of authority could cause to return to their duty. The Regent would have very much liked to see it in the same light, but the advices of Saint-Simon, embittered against the Parliament on account of the prerogatives of the dukes, were suspicious to him.

The indecision of the Regent threw Law into the most cruel anguish. He feared to be hanged while the means of saving him from this fate were so slowly sought, and, not feeling safe at the Bank, he took refuge in the Palais-Royal. Abbé Du-bois, even more deserving of hanging than Law, felt that he might become the second victim of the public, that all his existence depended solely on his master's power, and that, if it were once destroyed, the dignities of which the minister was

invested, far from saving him, would be made his foremost crime.

The new keeper of the seals was well aware how offended was the Parliament at seeing itself subordinated to him whom it had so long treated as a subaltern. D'Argenson, while lieutenant of police, had on several occasions been summoned to the bar of the court, and there, standing and bare-headed, he had received reprimands with more respect than timidity and with an interior contempt which he was to-day in a position to show. He was the least proud of men, but the most firm, and full of expedients in affairs. The one which naturally presented itself was to destroy in a bed of justice all that the Parliament had done.

The keeper of the seals, in order to maintain the King's authority, and Abbé Dubois, for less noble motives, but not less powerful, besieging the Regent, made him ashamed of his weakness. The Duc de Saint-Simon seconded them earnestly, and M. le Duc de Bourbon, joining them through personal interest, the bed of justice was resolved upon.

Since M. le Duc Bourbon was of age, it was



with great impatience that he saw the superintendence of the King's education in the hands of the Duc du Maine, claiming that that place only should belong to the first prince of the blood of age, and that since the decree of 1717, the Duc du Maine had only the honours of prince, and was no longer prince of the blood.

The Regent, not daring to refuse him personally, charged Saint-Simon to dissuade him from a pretension which only would multiply the malcontents. Vainly did Saint-Simon picture to M. le Duc the dangers of a civil war, that the change of superintendent did not require a bed of justice, that the Regent promised, on his honour, and even in writing, to satisfy M. le duc, when the affairs of State should be settled: the latter replied that he had no more faith in the writing than he did in the word of the Regent; that he did not wish to give the Duc du Maine the opportunity to establish himself in the King's mind, a thing which would infallibly happen if he remained with him until his majority, and that it was the part of the Regent to see whether he preferred a legitimated prince to a prince of the blood whose constant

friendship or hatred would be the price of the acceptance or the refusal of his request.

The most virtuous people of the Court never forget their private interests. The Duc de Saint-Simon seeing the obstinacy of M. le duc, wished to turn it to his own account. "Monsieur," said he to him, "since no consideration can turn you from your project, I am going to give you some facilities to carry it out. Take away from the legitimated all the outside appearance of princes of the blood, by having them reduced to the rank of their peerage; then the superintendence of education falls of itself. Marshal de Villeroi can no longer be subordinated to his equal even in the peerage. You will be able, in your request, to make use of this consideration, with a word of praise for Marshal de Villeroi, whose vanity will be flattered by it. In that way you gain a partisan in the person of one of the chiefs of the cabal, you strengthen yourself with the dukes and you attach them all to yourself. Not one of them but will look upon you as the author of the intermediate rank left to the legitimated. M. le Regent, either to excuse himself towards the peers, or to cast

on you their resentment, has not permitted them to ignore that you alone were opposed to the reduction of the legitimated to the rank of their peerage, when their right of succession to the throne was taken from them. You are not indifferent to having so considerable a body as a friend or an enemy. You have just told me that unalterable resentment or an inviolate attachment to M. le Regent would be the price of the refusal or granting of your request: be assured that all the peers through me make the same protestation with regard to you, on the subject of the reduction of the legitimated."

M. le duc at once agreed to the proposition of the Duc de Saint-Simon. "I consent," he added, "to the reduction of the legitimated, but you have shown them to me so formidable, through their establishments and the accumulation of their dignities, that they must be stripped totally and nothing left to them but what shall be necessary to maintain their rank of peer. It is with regret that I sacrifice the Comte de Toulouse, but the danger of allowing the Duc du Maine to continue as he is, renders the sacrifice necessary. Besides, I want

for my brother, the Comte de Charolais, a governorship befitting his birth, and there is none vacant; the spoils of the Duc du Maine will procure one for him."

"You are going a little too far, monsieur," replied Saint-Simon; "it is unjust to strip any one, without his having been declared a criminal. If such violence should be resorted to, no one in this kingdom could consider himself safe. All those who enjoy the least important places would look upon the cause of the legitimated as their own; I myself would join it and the uprising would become general. At the death of the King, the legitimated could have been charged with the crime of *lèse-majesté* against the crown, for having had themselves declared able to succeed to it. That in allowing them their lives, liberty and property, they should have been granted the sole rank of duke and peer, out of respect for the blood of their father, and that all else should have been taken from them, all was just then. But to-day that their establishments have been confirmed, you can attack them only in the vice of their birth and reduce them to the rank of their peerage. M. le

Comte de Charolais will not lack establishments, and you will be able to procure them for him, without having recourse to injustice and to violence. With regard to the Comte de Toulouse, there is a very simple way of distinguishing him from his brother; it is to have them both reduced by an edict, and immediately to re-establish, by a declaration, the Comte de Toulouse to the rank which he enjoys to-day, without the honours ever passing to his posterity. In this manner, you do justice to merit, and you disunite the two brothers. Whatever deference the Comte de Toulouse may have for his elder, he is too wise to ally himself to the resentment of his brother and to the fury of the Duchesse du Maine. And, if the Comte de Toulouse allowed himself to be lured to the extent of forgetting his duty, he would be shorn of all with the approbation of the public."

M. le duc, delighted at being able to reconcile his hatred against the Duc du Maine with his friendship for the Comte de Toulouse, consented to all that Saint-Simon proposed, and the latter taking advantage of M. le duc's dispositions: "It is not sufficient," said he to him, "to consent;

you must make it your own personal affair with the Regent. It is you who have lost the dukes and peers, it is for you to recover them and cause gratitude to follow resentment. I demand your word on the matter because I know that one can depend on it." M. le duc gave it and kept it. Saint-Simon came to render to the Regent an account of his conference with M. le duc; but he did not at first declare to him the engagement that that prince had taken in favour of the peers, and contented himself with reminding him how often he had made him hope the re-establishment of the peers. The Regent, wishing to make use of subterfuge, promised much more than he thought, transferred the whole matter to M. le duc and said that if he consented to it, he, the Regent, would be delighted. The Duc de Saint-Simon allowed him to paraphrase his good will for the peers, and when he saw him well involved, he declared to him that M. le duc would be the more inclined to it that he wished to unload himself of the hatred of the peers of which he had been made the object. The Regent suddenly became sombre and dreamy. Saint-Simon did not

give him time to recover, but urged him earnestly, and finally compelled him to say, with the air of a man who is just coming to, that he concurred with pleasure to all that M. le duc might wish in favour of the peers. Saint-Simon thereupon left him, counting much less on him, however, than on M. le duc. In fact, the latter charged Millain, for a long time secretary to Chancellor de Pontchartrain, a very intelligent man, and who, since his master's retirement, had attached himself to the house of Condé, to draw up the project of the reduction of the legitimated.

All that was needed now was to take the necessary measures for the bed of justice of which the Parliament was not to be apprised before the morning of the very day. The only ones in the secret were the keeper of the seals, the Ducs de Saint-Simon and de la Force, Law, Fagon, and Abbé Dubois. The last, whose only support was the Regent, desired to turn the affair into a negotiation, without playing the mediator, and proposed to put off until Saint-Martin's Day the annulment of the decrees of the Parliament. It was to be feared that this advice, so much in accord with the



LOUIS XV AS A CHILD





laxity of the Regent, might win, but the keeper of the seals, always firm, Saint-Simon more earnest than ever, and la Force, allied themselves against the abbé, and caused the bed of justice to be decided for Friday the 26th, the morrow of Saint-Louis day.

All obstacles were not brushed away. The thought came that the Duc du Maine and Marshal de Villeroi, at the first proposition of a bed of justice, would allege the fear of exposing the King's health to the heat, the fatigue, and the bad air of the city, where there then prevailed a good deal of smallpox; that they would draw up a document of their remonstrances and with it would frighten a child of eight years who would refuse to go to Parliament. These reflections were beginning to discourage the committee, when Saint-Simon proposed to hold the bed of justice at the Tuileries. This expedient reanimated all the actors. The King's health was no longer a pretext. Although master everywhere, he would seem even more so in his palace; the imagination of the magistrates would be more struck by it. They would feel more strange and less assured

there than in the accustomed seats. Some difficulties still remained. It was necessary, before the bed of justice, to make a report to the regency council of the decrees, edicts and declarations which were to be recorded. The legitimated were of this council, the majority was devoted to them, resolutions so important required the approval of at least the majority and this could not be counted upon. M. le duc claimed that the only thing to be reported to the council was the decree of annulment and that nothing was to be said of the others, but there was not the less risk on that account: all the members of the council, who sat at the bed of justice, already opposed to the affair, would be offended at the secrecy. The Duc du Maine and his partisans would not fail to declare that nothing had been communicated to the council, and would justify what the Parliament was ceaselessly spreading among the public, that all was done by the sole will of the Regent, in opposition to the authentic promise made to conform himself to the majority of votes, a promise which had served as a foundation of the regency.

Marshal de Villeroi, it was said, will call to wit-

ness the ghost of the old King, will shed tears, will talk irrationally, but in pathetic tones more contagious than reasons. The daring Villars, the only French general, decorated with victories, author or instrument of the salvation of France at Denain, will arise with a military eloquence quite natural to him, and which persuades and carries away. The Parliament seeing itself supported, will recover its spirits. The presence of an eight-year old King, far from overawing them may perhaps even turn to their advantage. If this child, precious to the State, who will have come to such an assembly as to a spectacle, chances to be frightened at so novel a tumult, if he happens to let himself be moved by the tears of his old tutor, if he himself sheds some, to what account may they not be turned? The Regent will be represented as a tyrant who takes advantage of the name and authority of a child-King.

These considerations impressed the Regent, who was very near drawing back. M. le duc less enlightened, but with an insurmountable obstinacy, strengthened him in his first decision, declaring that, were a civil war to be the outcome, he pre-

ferred it much more during a minority than under a King of age.

It was finally decided that the material for the bed of justice would be collected secretly; that it would be put together only on the very day at the Tuileries, in two hours' time; that the Parliament, the peers and the officers of the crown would only be notified at six o'clock in the morning; that the council would meet at eight, that an account would be rendered of the decree of annulment only; and that the other, all ready and sealed, would only be produced at the bed of justice.

The fear of the Regent was much allayed by that shown by the Parliament, the Duc du Maine and Marshal de Villeroi. One side of the scale can not go down without the other rising. The Regent became firm as he noticed his adversaries weaken. The Duc du Maine, having asked him through the Comte de Toulouse if there was any foundation in the rumour spread that he, Duc du Maine, was to be arrested, showed by that that he had something else to reproach himself for beside an idle dissatisfaction, and the Regent's reply was not the kind to make him feel at ease. Mar-

shal de Villeroi, with an embarrassed expression, asking enlightenment on the same subject, the Regent told him that he might be reassured and persuaded him but little; therefore he did not wish to dissipate all his fears. The marshal spoke of it to Abbé Dubois, much astonished to see the arrogance of the haughty lord vanish before him. The Parliament's conduct was even more ridiculous. Law, whom it wished to hang three days before, left his shelter in the Palais-Royal, boldly returned to his house, and there received the advances of Parliament. The Duc d'Aumont, as eager for money as his friend the premier president, and seeking to please Law, waited on him, told him that there was but a misunderstanding on the part of Parliament, and that he, Duc d'Aumont, wished to smooth over the entire matter. He treated a convulsion in the State as a quarrel of classes and boasted specially of being a disinterested mediator. Law, knowing how matters stood regarding the disinterestedness of our courtiers, agreed to a meeting with this one for the 27th, because all was to be ended on the 26th.

The Regent saw clearly that the cabal was dis-

concerted. He had a mind to strike at the premier president, but he was made to see that it was better to make the Assembly suspicious by pretending that he was in league with the Court.

Thursday the 25th was employed in taking the necessary measures. It was agreed: first, that the bed of justice would be held with open doors, because affairs would then be discussed as at grand audiences, and that the keeper of the seals, taking the votes quietly, would report them as he wished; second, that M. le duc, when the question of superintendence should come up, would leave the hall as an interested party, which would oblige the legitimated to leave also.

To ward off any trouble, all contingencies had been provided for. If the Parliament refused to come, the interdiction was ready, with the attribution of the causes to the grand council. If a part came, and another did not come, those who stayed away were to be suspended. If the Parliament, having come, refused to concur, to proceed. If, not content with not concurring, it left the hall, hold the bed of justice anyway, and, eight days after, hold another at the grand council, to record

all. If the legitimated or anyone of their party should create any disturbance, arrest them at the meeting or on leaving, according to the signals to be agreed upon with the officers of the gardes du corps.

The orders were given to the commanders of the troops of the Maison du Roi only on the 26th, at four o'clock in the morning. The Duc du Maine, who was returning from one of those receptions which were often given to his wife, or which she gave herself, was about to get into bed when Contades was announced to him. The duc, fearing that it might be to arrest him, asked if Contades was alone and was reassured when he heard that it was to assemble the Swiss guards.

At five o'clock, the troops took up their positions, and at six the Parliament and all those who were to be at the bed of justice, already awakened by the noise of the drums, received the lettres-de-cachet and the invitations. At eight o'clock, the regency council was already assembled at the Tuileries. The keeper of the seals was having arranged in a private room all the paraphernalia of the seal and, as cold as if it were only a question of



a police audience, breakfasted calmly to prepare himself for the long session which would delay his dinner.

All had betaken themselves to the council chamber; the Regent reached there with a laughing and confident face. All did not seem so much at their ease. The Duc du Maine, pale and embarrassed, foresaw that other questions would come up besides the annulment of decrees. Several met, discussed, spoke in whispers, sought to guess what was about to take place.

The Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse had come in the peer's cloaks, although they had received no invitations. These had not been sent them, on the pretext that since the decree of 1717, which revoked that of 1714, they no longer wished to attend Parliament. The Regent had flattered himself on that account that they would dispense with the bed of justice, which would have relieved him greatly. That is why, addressing the Comte de Toulouse, he said to him in friendly tones: "I am surprised to see you in your cloak; I did not have you notified, knowing that you did not care to attend the Parliament."

“That is true,” replied the Comte de Toulouse, “but when it is for the good of the State, I put aside all other considerations.”

The Regent, touched by this reply, took him aside, confided all to him; and the Comte de Toulouse, having rejoined his brother, told him enough so that they decided to withdraw.

The Regent, seeing them go out, judged that there was nothing to hinder the making of a report of all the things which it had been intended to conceal. There were twenty at the meeting.

As soon as all had taken their seats, the Regent, with an air of authority, ordered the keeper of the seals to read his report. The Regent announced each document by a short address which the keeper of the seals paraphrased according to the importance of the matter.

The Regent, in this meeting, gave his opinion first, in opposition to the usual rule, and always took the votes beginning with the head of the council, so that the previous speakers, of whom he was sure, would make the others anticipate the decision to which they should come.

When the vote was taken on the decree of annul-

ment, those who were constrained by the obstacles which were put in the way of the Parliament contented themselves with nodding their heads, to show their acquiescence to the broached opinion. Marshal de Villeroi simply said in a smothered voice, with regard to the Parliament: "But will it come?"

"I have no doubt of it," said the Regent drily, and raising his voice: "it has sent me word by des Granges that it would obey."

The Regent announced the edict of the reduction of the legitimated to their rank in the peerage by a speech in favor of the peers even stronger than the edict itself. The Duc de Saint-Simon said, that being an interested party, he could not be judge, and that, as *solé* opinion, he could only offer thanks for the justice which His Royal Highness rendered to the peers. The Regent, grasping this idea, did not ask the opinion of the other peers, and those who followed them voted only with a nod. However, the Duc de Saint-Simon, to obviate what Marshals-dukes de Villeroi and de Villars might object if they should speak, had

placed on the table the request which the peers had presented the year before against the legitimated, and at the bottom of which the two marshals could read their names in large characters. M. le duc then began to speak, and addressing the Regent, said that, since justice was being done to the peers, he also claimed the rights of his birth; that M. du Maine, being no longer prince of the blood, he could not retain the superintendence; that a man of the merit of M. le Maréchal de Villeroi should not be preceded by his junior in the peerage; that he, M. le duc, to-day of age, asked that place, which could not be refused to his rank, nor to his attachment for the King, and that he would omit nothing to profit by M. de Villeroi's lessons and deserve his friendship. •

The Regent was the first to vote; he said that the request was just, and casting his eyes over all, ordered rather than took the opinions. Marshal de Villeroi, making an effort to speak, said with a sigh: "All the dispositions of the late King are overthrown! I can not see it without sorrow: M. du Maine is very unfortunate!"

"Monsieur," replied the Regent in quite sharp tones, "M. du Maine is my brother-in-law; but I prefer an open to a concealed enemy."

These few words, and some looks cast on several, sent terror into the minds of those who had something of which to reproach themselves.

At this moment the keeper of the seals was called to the door. He went out, returned immediately and whispered to the Regent. The latter, whose firmness increased with the council's consternation, said that he was informed that the premier-president had proposed not to go to the Tuileries, where no liberty would be had, and that the question was being deliberated upon. The Regent asked the keeper of the seals what should be done if the Parliament formally disobeyed. The keeper of the seals replied that there was nothing else to do other than to suspend it, and made it clear that all events were anticipated and the remedies ready.

As soon as the Parliament was seen to enter the Tuileries courtyard, after having crossed the city on foot, the Regent forbade anyone from leaving before the magistrates had taken their places, so

that they could not be informed of what the council had decided. A committee went at once to the King, and having invited him, he was conducted to the throne.

The Regent, wishing to forestall what the Marshal de Villeroi might be tempted to say at the bed of justice, and which he had had so much trouble to hold back at the council meeting, sent someone to assure him of his esteem, his confidence, had enough told him to dissipate his fear which sometimes makes people bold, and not enough to inspire him with courage. Lamoignon de Blancmesnil, premier counsel general, to-day chancellor, was also enjoined to be prudent: and he was told in a whisper that his entire fortune depended on the slightest ambiguity in his decision.

So much precaution was superfluous. Consternation had taken possession of all, from the Duc du Maine to the lowest usher of the Parliament. Several counsellors had deserted during the march. President de Blamont, who had so often played the tribune in the meetings of the Parliament, fainted on the stairs of the Tuileries; he was carried into the chapel, where the wine from the cruets

was used to help him recover consciousness. But, not being in a condition to appear at the session, he had himself taken home.

I shall not linger over the formalities of a bed of justice; they can be found everywhere. I shall merely remark that the keeper of the seals, in the midst of a Parliament by which he was detested, was as bold in his steps, in his speeches and his tone of voice as if he had only seen about him so many police officers.

After the reading of the decree of annulment, the premier president simply asked that it be communicated to the Parliament, in view of the importance of the matter, to deliberate on it. Whereupon the keeper of the seals, having taken the King's order as a 'matter of form, said: "The King wishes to be obeyed, and obeyed at once." Everything else passed quietly; the registry having been made in the King's presence, His Majesty arose, returned to his apartment, and the Parliament slipped away in silence.

As trifles are better fitted to make known the disposition of minds and character than important matters, I shall mention two incidents which will

show the general opinion in which the Regent was held, and will give an idea of his carelessness of affairs, when his pleasures were in question.

When the Duc de Saint-Simon went to see Fontanieu, to arrange with him regarding the bed of justice, he began by telling him that he came for an important matter, but first of all that it was necessary to know if His Royal Highness could count on him. Fontanieu became pale, not doubting but that he meant to speak of some tragic business of which he was unfortunately to be the instrument; he replied stammering that, so long as his duty would permit . . . he would be. . . . The Duc de Saint-Simon reassured him by a smile and a gesture, half of compassion, half of indignation. Fontanieu recovered himself and, by tangled excuses, showed the fear he had and of what he believed the Regent capable.

The second incident is that the Regent, having appeared to be in a great hurry to learn what Saint-Simon might have arranged with Fontanieu, ordered him to come and make a report of it at once. The conference at Fontanieu's having required long details, when Saint-Simon returned, the



Regent was in his closet; and it was the *roués'* hour, the hour during which all had to give way to debauchery. Saint-Simon was compelled to write to him, and besides this, much mystery was required to have the letter reach its destination. And yet, one must not think that this prince did not draw a well-defined line between those who had a share in affairs and his boon companions, which caused the Duc de Brancas, one of his *roués*, to say that he had much favour but no credit. Besides this, the Regent had made for himself a system of discretion to which he was faithful even in intoxication. The Comtesse de Sabran, one of the favourites, desiring to take advantage of one of those moments to speak to him on a matter of business, he led her before a looking-glass, and said to her: "Look at yourself, see if so pretty a face should talk business."

Since I have permitted myself to digress on the domesticity of the Regent, I must not forget a man of rare virtue, who was neither of the rank nor birth of the *roués*, but who would have had no dealings with them, and did not conceal his contempt from them; he was Ibagnet, *concierge* of

the Palais-Royal. Attached to the house of Orléans since his childhood, he had seen the Regent born, loved him tenderly and served him zealously, spoke to him with the freedom of an old servant, and with the direct manner and truth of a man worthy of being his master's friend. The Regent had for Ibagnet that sort of respect which virtue compels. He would not have dared to propose to him to be the minister of his pleasures: he was sure of refusal. Sometimes, a candle-stick in hand, Ibagnet conducted his master to the door of the room where the orgy took place. One day the Regent laughingly asked him to enter: "Monsieur," replied Ibagnet, "my service ends here, I do not mingle with such evil company, and I am very sorry to see you in it." At another time he treated as the lowest of beings, Cauche, valet de chambre and Mercury of the Regent, because that servant had seduced a young girl of twelve or thirteen years to turn her over to his master.

Let us return to the outcome of the bed of justice. It was ended, but the Duchesse d'Orléans being at Saint-Cloud with Madame, mother of the Regent, was still ignorant of there having been

one. Let one recall her folly with regard to her birth, which she believed at least equal to that of her husband, and one will understand what a blow the news of the degradation of the Duc du Maine must have been. Yet she had to be informed of it, and the Regent charged the Duc de Saint-Simon with this cruel mission. He first told Madame who, raised in the principles, or, if one prefers, in the prejudices of Germany, was delighted to hear it, and said that her son should have come to that decision long ago. As to the Duchesse d'Orléans, she was seized with a mournful grief, returned at once to Paris and, laying her pride aside for the first time in her life, she said to the Regent that the extreme honour he had done her in marrying her hushed all other sentiment in her heart; that her brother must be very guilty to have drawn to himself the punishment he received and that she was reduced to wish it.

The two brothers, on leaving the council room, had locked themselves with their intimates in the Duc du Maine's closet, at the Tuileries, during the bed of justice. From there, the Comte de

Toulouse withdrew to his rooms, where the Duchesse du Maine came with her children. She was in a paroxysm of fury, reproaching the Comte de Toulouse with having been distinguished apart from his brother, and claimed that he could only clear himself by renouncing the unworthy favour done to him. The Comte de Toulouse was delighted, but Valincourt, a man of great sense and much attached to the prince, taking him aside, made him see the outcome of such an act. The Marquis d'O, who had been his tutor, spoke to him in the same way, and the Chevalier d'Hautefort, his chief equerry, excited by a more lively interest than that of his master, spoke even more efficaciously: "Monseigneur," said he to him, "could you be such a dupe as to associate yourself to the fury of a mad-woman? When you will have been the admiration of fools for three days, you will be for forty years the laughing stock of sensible people. As for me, in attaching myself to your person, I expected to be with a prince of the blood, real or apparent; on this footing I shall remain with you all my life; but if you wish to

cease to be, neither I nor all those of your household who are worth anything will be able to remain."

The Comte de Toulouse frightened by the abyss into which he was about to throw himself, allowed the Duc and the Duchesse du Maine to leave for Sceaux, on the morrow, paid a sort of visit of thanks to the Regent, and the following day appeared at the regency council.

On Saturday, the 27th, the Chambers assembled; there was more moaning there than deliberating; there was much complaining regarding the installation of a keeper of the seals, without his having, according to rules, presented his request; action was taken as is usual on such occasions, of the lack of liberty; the Assembly was adjourned to Monday, the 29th. But on that day, the Parliament was kept busy with a new topic of deliberation. At three o'clock in the morning, President de Blamont, Faydau de Calande and Saint-Martin, councilors, were carried away from their homes, each by eight musqueteers and an officer, and conducted, the first to

the islands of Hyères, the second to Belle-Isle, the third to the island of Oléron.

The Parliament immediately sent a committee to ask the King for the liberty of her magistrates. The keeper of the seals replied that what had been done being an affair of State, it required silence, and the conduct of the Parliament would determine the King's sentiments on that question. The same committee continued its solicitations and always received the same replies, until the close of the Parliament. A few proposed to discontinue the function, and it was suspended for one day; others, not to take a vacation until satisfaction was obtained; but the most prudent preferred to leave Paris freely than to expose themselves to being exiled from it. The Parliament therefore adjourned and the *Chambre des vacations* was charged to continue to ask for the exiled.

The Parliament of Brittany wrote in their favour to the Regent, who did not take at all kindly to the action. The foreign ministers, in their masters' name, complimented him for having checked these civilians; the language of princes

who wish that nothing should oppose their will. It is certain that authority should always be respected, for the tranquillity of the people themselves; but if no Body raises its voice in their favour, they will then be surrendered to the despotism of ministers and even of clerks.

It was during the vacation, on October 3rd, that Cardinal de Noailles published his appeal from the Constitution to the future assembly of prelates. The University, almost all the priests of the diocese, and numerous secular societies subscribed to the appeal. The cardinal withdrew on the same day from the council of conscience which from that time no longer subsisted, and whose fall brought about that of the other councils. For sometime already it had been but an empty display; Law was sole master in matters of finance, and Abbé Dubois in foreign affairs. The latter, knowing that the cardinal's hat, to which he aspired, would depend on the credit he could secure in France, had himself appointed sole minister of foreign affairs. Le Blanc was at the same time named secretary of war. All the members of the different councils were dispensed with, and

kept their salaries, which were twelve thousand livres. The Marquis de Canillac refused his, but he entered the regency council, where the office was worth twenty thousand livres. All these noble members of the council resembled people, who on leaving a house, take away the furniture. The Comte d'Evreux retained the detail of cavalry; Coigny, that of the dragoons; d'Asfeld, the fortifications and the engineers; the Marquis de Brancas had the breeding-stud; the chief equerry, Béringhen, the department of bridges and highways; the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Bezans, took the stewardship, and so forth. The Regent knew not how to refuse, and what he did not give, was taken from him. He had singular inconsistencies. The change in the standing of the legitimated embarrassed very much the Bishop of Viviers, Chambonas, whose brother and sister-in-law belonged to the house of the Duc du Maine. The prelate, chief of the deputation of the *Etats* of Languedoc, asked the Regent how he should address the Prince de Dombes. The Regent told him to act in the usual manner; consequently, the bishop addressed as Serene Highness the Prince de



Dombes, who could no longer lay claim to the title.

At last the Regent allowed himself to be persuaded in favour of the exiled. They returned successively and the Parliament, become compliant, gave thanks for it, as for a favour. This did not prevent it from making objections to the registering of the Royal Bank. It was considered very improper to have the King become a banker. Events proved that it was even more unfortunate.

The stroke of authority struck at the bed of justice had stunned the Regent's enemies, but had not disheartened them. The fury which the Duchesse du Maine was obliged to hide was only the more sharp on that account, and her correspondence with Spain the more frequent. The Prince de Cellamare, attentive to all which took place in Paris and in Brittany, sought to make creatures for the King, his master, and many officers had entered into an engagement with him. The project was to make the whole kingdom revolt against the Regent; to place the King of Spain at the head of the government of France, and under him the Duc du Maine.

The alliance of the Parliament was expected. All had been negotiated rather enigmatically in letters which might be intercepted, but Alberoni, before acting, wanted to see the plans agreed upon and the names of those who were to be used. It was extremely dangerous to confide such details to a messenger whom Abbé Dubois would not have failed to have arrested.

Cellamare conceived the idea that there could be no one less suspicious than young Abbé de Porto-Carrero, nephew of the cardinal of the same name. This young man had been in Paris for some time. Monteleon, son of the Spanish ambassador to England, had also come from Holland, and these two young men, meeting in Paris, became intimate, sought the same pleasures, burdened themselves but little with affairs, and decided to return together.

Cellamare thought that two such messengers would be safe from all suspicion; Abbé Dubois in truth suspected nothing, and yet everything was discovered.

There was at that time in Paris, a woman named Fillon, a celebrated procuress, consequently

well known by Abbé Dubois. She even at times appeared at the Regent's audiences, and was not more ill received there than others. A tone of jest covered all indecencies at the Palais-Royal and this has continued to endure in high society. One of Cellamare's secretaries had an appointment with one of the Fillon woman's girls, on the day that the Abbé de Porto-Carrero was to leave. He came to it quite late and excused himself by saying that he had been very busy preparing letters which were to be given in charge of our travellers. The Fillon woman left the lovers together and immediately went to give an account of the matter to Abbé Dubois. At once a messenger was sent forward, armed with orders to secure assistance if necessary. He joined the travellers at Poitiers, had them arrested; all their papers were seized and brought back to Paris on Thursday the 8th December. This messenger reached Abbé Dubois's residence precisely at the hour when the Regent was entering the Opera.

The abbé opened the package, had the time to examine everything and to lay aside all he wished: we shall see why. At the close of the Opera, the

abbé joined the Regent, and gave him an account of the capture. Any other prince would have been in a hurry to be enlightened; but it was the precious supper hour and nothing could outweigh that. The abbé had until rather late the next day to take his steps, before conferring with the Regent who, in the first morning hours, his head still heavy with the fumes of the last evening's debauch, was not in a condition to hear about affairs and signed almost mechanically anything presented to him.

Abbé Dubois, while aspiring to everything, still felt that he was nothing in himself, foresaw the revolutions which might occur through his master's death, and wished to procure some protectors for himself in case of emergency.

He resolved to take such hold of affairs that he might be able to sacrifice those whose ruin would be of no consequence, and save those with whom he could make a merit of it. The Regent saw nothing in that affair but through the abbé's eyes. The keeper of the seals and Le Blanc were the only confidants of it, and the abbé, possessed of the papers in the case, found himself master of

the condemnation or of the absolution of the guilty.

Prince de Cellamare, informed by a private messenger of what had happened at Poitiers and flattering himself that the two Spaniards had only been arrested because they were travelling with a fugitive bankrupt banker, affected an air of assurance and went, on Friday, the 9th, about noon, to call on Le Blanc to claim the package of letters which he had by chance, he said, intrusted to Abbé Porto-Carrero. Abbé Dubois was already at Le Blanc's. They both replied to the ambassador that the letters had been read, and that, far from returning them to him, they had orders to examine the papers in his closet and in his presence, and they immediately requested him to enter a coach with them so that they might take the inventory together.

Cellamare, judging that measures were taken, in case of resistance, made no objections, and was brought back to his residence, of which a detachment of musqueteers had already taken possession. The desks and boxes were opened. The seals of the King and of the ambassador were



CARDINAL ALBERONI



placed on all the papers, in proportion as they were examined and assorted. After this had been done, the two ministers withdrew, leaving the ambassador in the keeping of Dulibois, gentleman in ordinary to the King.

During the examination of the papers, Cellamare, with an easy air, affected to treat Le Blanc with politeness and the abbé with cold contempt. To the point that when Le Blanc was about to open a small casket: "Monsieur Le Blanc," said the ambassador, "that is not within your province; it contains letters from women; leave them to the abbé, who all his life has been a *maquereau*." The abbé smiled and pretended to take it as a joke.

In the evening, there was a council meeting where an account of the conspiracy was rendered; letters from Cellamare to Cardinal Alberoni were read and the Regent fully justified his proceedings towards the ambassador who, having himself violated the rights of people, had lost the privilege of his title. The letters were printed, spread broadcast; none of the foreign ministers took up the defence of Cellamare, who left Paris, accom-



panied by Dulibois and two captains of cavalry. They stopped off at Blois, where Cellamare was detained until the arrival in France of Duc de Saint-Aignan, our ambassador to Madrid; after which he was permitted to continue on his way freely.

On Saturday morning the 10th, the Marquis de Pompadour, the last of his name, father of the beautiful Courcillon and grandfather of the Princesse de Rohan, was sent to the Bastille.

The Comte d'Aydie, cousin, brother-in-law and bearing the same name as Riom, took flight and withdrew to Spain, where he died long after, in rather good circumstances.

On the very evening that Cellamare was arrested, d'Aydie, being at a house where he was to have his supper, was watching a game of chess. Someone enters and reports that Cellamare has been arrested; d'Aydie, very attentive to a piece of news so interesting to him, did not show the least emotion. One of the players having said that he could not continue the game, d'Aydie offered to take it up, was accepted, played calmly and won. When supper was served, he left on the

plea of indisposition, took the mail coach and went away.

Foucault de Magny, introducer of the ambassadors and son of the State counsellor, ran away also: he was a fool whose only wise act was to flee. A certain Abbé Brigault, very deep in this affair, was arrested at Montargis on a description and brought to the Bastille. He did not have to be pressed to confess all he knew, adding that the details of the matter would be found in the papers which he had left with the Chevalier de Ménéil, who was arrested; but he had already burned the papers, a thing which the Regent regretted very much. Many persons were arrested successively before reaching the Duc and the Duchesse du Maine. This took place before long; the duc was arrested at Sceaux by la Billarderie, lieutenant of the gardes du corps, conducted to the château of Dourlens, in Picardy, and left in charge of Favancourt, corporal of musqueteers.

The duchesse, in consideration of her birth, was treated with more distinction. It was the Duc d'Ancenis, who arrested her in a house of the rue Saint-Honoré, which she had taken so as to be

nearer the Tuileries. The Duc d'Ancenis left her at Esonne, from where a lieutenant and an officer of the gardes du corps conducted her to the château of Dijon.

In his misfortune the Duc du Maine showed only submission; protested often his innocence and his attachment to the King and to the Regent. As for the duchesse, she complained much of the treatment offered to a princess of the blood, and furiously assailed her nephew, M. le duc, when she saw herself in the château of Dijon of which he was the governor, and the public did not approve of his being his aunt's jailer.

All the servants of the house of Maine were arrested at the same time as their master and were locked in the Bastille. Mademoiselle de Launai, who, since, has become Madame de Staal, was among them. Her memoirs deserve to be read: her portraits are quite faithful, with the exception of that of the Chevalier de Ménil, whom she loved too much to judge him properly. I have met him a number of times at her house and he appeared to me to be less than mediocre.

While these things were going on in Paris, the

Duc de Saint-Aignan, our ambassador at Madrid, was rather uncomfortable there. Although nothing as yet was known there about what had happened in Paris, the break between the two crowns seemed so near, and the violence of Alberoni so well known, that the Duc de Saint-Aignan did not consider himself safe. He left secretly with his wife and a few servants and reached the foot of the Pyrenees. There, not doubting but that Alberoni would send after him, he took trunks for himself, his wife and his valets, but only those absolutely necessary, crossed the mountains and did not stop until he reached Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. He had taken the precaution to leave in his coach a valet de chambre and a woman who announced themselves, while continuing their voyage, as the ambassador and ambassadress. The duc had hardly gone a league in the mountains when men sent by Alberoni surrounded the coach. The servants played their parts well, loudly protested against the violence and were brought back to Pampelune. When the Duc de Saint-Aignan had arrived at Bayonne, he sent someone to claim his carriage, which was returned to him, and the

dens, where the children of the bourgeois came to lose what they stole from their families. Several tragic adventures finally made it known that these places were the seminaries of the Place de la Grève. Cardinal de Fleury, having become minister, prohibited them. This vile privilege of the governor still exists in several provinces. The protectors do not blush at the infamous source of the income which they draw from it and apparently think, like Vespasian, that "money has no odour."

It was at that time that the *Philippiques*, a poem against the Regent, written by La Grange, appeared. This work wherein there are but a few poetical strophes, is a mass of horrors in which the most frenzied calumny is supported by a few truths. Copies of it went all over France. The Regent heard of it and desired to see the book. The Duc de Saint-Simon claims that it was he who, pressed by the solicitations of the prince, made him read that frightful libel. He adds that when the Regent reached the place in which he is called the poisoner of the royal family, he shuddered, almost fainted, and unable to control his

tears, he exclaimed: " Ah! it is too much! this horror is more than I can bear! " It took him some time to recover from his despair.

La Grange was arrested and sent to the îles Sainte-Marguerite, from which he was liberated during the regency and showed himself freely about Paris. I have always believed that this was done to destroy the opinion which existed that the Regent had had him assassinated, otherwise it would have been the height of impudence. An author who would have done one-half as much against a councilor of the Parliament would have been sent to the galleys.

The reader has been able to see until now that I do not conceal either the depraved morals or the bad administration of the Regent; but I must render justice to his natural goodness. When his humane character is considered, one can not help but regret that he had not more princely virtues.

As soon as the Duc and the Duchesse du Maine were arrested, alarm spread in their party. Marshal de Villeroi lost his arrogance, Villars his audacity, d'Huxelles, Taillard, Canillac, d'Effiat and the premier president showed their fear by

the efforts they made in concealing it. The best protection the accused could have, was the Regent's heart. Good and bad proceedings, services and offences affected him but little; he gave and did not reward, forgave easily, did not esteem much and hated even less.

Moreover, Abbé Dubois felt that he would be charged by the public with having encouraged or at least with not having stopped the Regent's severity. The impetuosity of M. le duc made it feared that, if he were once freed of the counterbalance of the legitimated or of their partisans, he would raise himself on the ruins of the Regent and alone gather the fruit of all that the latter had done to make authority more firm. The abbé expected, in saving the Duc du Maine and the premier president, to create for himself, in case of events, a protection against the Parliament even, which might seek him out some day. What he did for his own safety, he easily persuaded the Regent was done for him alone, frightened him on the character of M. le duc, and made him understand that the public did not absolutely look upon the accused as guilty of *lèse-majesté*, but

as upon men attached to the State who had only sought to place the King's life in safety. The morals of the Regent, his display of irreligion, old and new rumours only favoured these ideas. That prince was impressed: his natural laziness, the fear of disturbing his pleasures combining with his considerations, he left the abbé sole master of that affair.

There was no regular proceeding nor referring to the Parliament. The keeper of the seals and Le Blanc questioned the prisoners and every day new ones were brought. It had been seen, through the papers of Cellamare, that this minister kept up different correspondence which had no connection with the Duchesse du Maine and which, nevertheless, had reference to Spain, without the guilty having any dealings with one another. For example, the Duc (to-day Marshal) de Richelieu and the Marquis de Saillans (d'Estaing), were sent to the Bastille. On the day they were arrested, the Regent said publicly that he had in his pocket enough to have four heads of the Duc de Richelieu cut off, if he had that many. He referred to four letters addressed



to Cardinal Alberoni, signed by the duc and in which he agreed to surrender to Spain, Bayonne, where his regiment and that of de Saillans were at that time garrisoned. This youthful giddy-head, who has hardly changed, expected to be the author of a revolution in the kingdom, and to have as a reward the regiment of the guards. This plot, which the lowest officer of the place could have caused to fail, only excited the laughter of the public. This young man thought himself a personage on seeing himself treated as a prisoner of State, and took his prison with the lightness which he has always shown in his amours, in affairs and in war. The Regent, who considered the matter as rather amusing, caused to be procured for the prisoner all that he asked, valet de chambre, two lackeys, games, instruments; so that instead of liberty, he had all possible licence.

While the Regent was busy with affairs of State, he was besides disturbed with domestic troubles. The Duchesse de Berri, carried away by the most foolish pride or debased in debauchery, gave public exhibitions of both.

The ambassador from Venice having called on

her, she took it upon herself to receive him in an arm-chair, on a platform with three steps. The ambassador stopped a moment, then advanced with the slowness of a man who meditates a decision, made a bow and immediately turned his back and went out without having said a word. On the same day he assembled all the foreign ministers, and all publicly declared that not one would again set their foot in the princess's house unless they were assured of being received as fitted their station.

The domestic life of the princess made a strange contrast to her public exhibitions of pride. I have already spoken of the shameful slavery in which the Comte de Riom held her, and he had all the less relaxed from his insolence towards her that he had made a system of it and that his harshness, his whims, his caprices strengthened the constancy of his mistress. Nor has the reader forgotten that retreats at the Carmelites preceded or followed her orgies. A nun who followed the princess at all the services of the convent, astonished at seeing her prostrated, mingling her sighs to the most fervent prayers: "Good Jesus!

Madame, is it possible that the public can speak so scandalously of you? The world is very wicked! you live here as a saint." The princess laughed. These incongruities certainly showed some degree of insanity. It was with the greatest anger that she heard that people dared to censure her conduct.

She finally became enceinte, and when she was near her delivery, she remained much in doors, and often in bed, under pretext of headaches. But the excesses of wine and strong liquor which she always continued over-heated her blood. In her confinement, a violent fever put her in the greatest danger. This daring, imperious woman, who defied all the proprieties, who had loudly proclaimed her commerce with Riom, flattered herself with hiding its outcome from the public, as if the acts of princes could ever remain unknown! The only ones to enter her room were Riom, the Marquise de Mouchy, lady of the bed-chamber, worthy confidant of her mistress, and the women necessary to the patient. The Regent himself only entered for moments: although it was impossible to suppose him ignorant

of his daughter's condition, he feigned in her presence to notice nothing, either through fear of angering her, if he seemed to know, or in the hope that his silence would stop the indiscretion of the others.

So many precautions did not hinder scandal and was soon to increase it. The danger became so great that it reached the ear of the curé of Saint-Sulpice, Languet. He betook himself to the Luxembourg, saw the Regent there, spoke to him of the necessity of informing the princess of the peril in which she was, to prepare her to receive the sacraments, and added that first of all Riom and the Mouchy woman must leave the palace.

The Regent, not daring to contradict the curé, nor alarm his daughter by the proposition of the sacraments, still less to excite her by the pastor's request regarding Riom and Mouchy, tried to make the curé understand that the expulsion of those two would cause the greatest scandal. He sought compromises; the curé rejected them all, judging that, in so important an occasion, in the midst of the quarrels of the Constitution wherein he played a part, he would be discredited by the

opposing party should he not show himself curate in all strictness. The Regent, being unable to persuade the curé, offered to refer the matter to Cardinal de Noailles. Languet consented to this and would perhaps not have been sorry that the complacency of the cardinal, in relieving a subordinate priest, who would have had the honour of a severe lecture, should lay himself open to the party of the Constitution. The cardinal requested to present himself at the Luxembourg, reached there, and on the Regent explaining matters to him, he approved the conduct of the curé, and insisted on the dismissal of the two subjects of scandal.

The Mouchy woman, unable to deceive herself as to the dangerous condition of her mistress, thought she had provided against all eventualities by sending for a Franciscan friar, to confess the princess, and did not doubt that after that the curé would bring the Viaticum. She did not suspect that she herself was the principal subject of the conference, when the Regent asked for her. She opened the door and the Regent, without entering or making her step out, told her on what

condition the sacraments were to be administered.

The Mouchy woman stunned at the compliment, yet brazened it out, became excited over the affront made to a woman of honour, assured that her mistress would not sacrifice her to bigots, went in again, and a few moments after, returned to tell the Regent that the princess was furious at so insolent a proposition, and closed the door once more. The cardinal, to whom the Regent brought the reply, explained that it was not to the one who was to be expelled that the message should have been intrusted; that it was the father's duty to exhort his daughter to fulfil her own. The prince, who knew his daughter's violent temper, excused himself, and on his refusal, the cardinal started to enter so as to speak himself. The Regent, fearing that the sight of the prelate and of the curé might cause a revolution in the patient which might kill her, threw himself before the cardinal and begged him to wait that she be prepared for such a visit. He had the door opened again and announced to the Mouchy woman that the archbishop and the curate wished to speak absolutely. The patient, who heard him, became

equally furious at her father and at the priests, saying that those hypocrites took advantage of her condition and of their office to disgrace her, and that her father had the weakness and the stupidity to suffer them, instead of having them thrown out of the window.

The Regent, more embarrassed than before, came to tell the cardinal that the patient was in such a state that action must be postponed. The prelate, wearied with insisting uselessly, withdrew after having ordered the curate to carefully watch to the duties of his ministry.

The Regent, much relieved by the retreat of the cardinal, would also have liked to be rid of the curé. But the latter settled himself at the door of the chamber and, during two days and two nights, whenever he went out to rest and take a little food, he had himself replaced by two priests who stood guard. At last, the danger having ceased, this ecclesiastical watch was raised, and the patient only thought of getting well.

In spite of her fury against the priests, the fear of hell had seized her. And the impression left was the greater because her health did not

return entirely and her passion was as strong as ever. Riom, assisted by the advice of the Duc de Lauzun, his uncle, resolved to take advantage of his mistress's disposition to bring her to a marriage which would quiet her conscience and would assure her pleasures. The Duc de Lauzun conceived the plan, the means, the expedients, and Riom acted accordingly.

They found but little resistance in a woman distraught with love, afraid of the devil, and long ago subjugated. Riom had only to order to be obeyed; he therefore was, and not four days passed between the project and the execution. A few dates brought together will prove it, and as the Duchesse de Berri died very soon after, I shall at once report that which concerns her.

That princess became ill on the 26th of March; Easter was on the 9th of April and, on Holy Tuesday, the 4th, she was out of danger. You must know that the custom of the parishes of Paris is to bring communion to all sick persons during Holy Week, even though such sick are not in a condition to receive the Viaticum: it suffices that they be unable to receive the Sacrament at church.



self with anger, she saw nothing more simple than to end it all by throwing Riom out of the window or into the river.

The Regent was the most grieved, and he might have followed Madame's advice, had he not feared the vengeance and perhaps the confession of a frenzied daughter. To avoid her persecutions, he seldom saw her, on the pretext of business and the distance of Meudon, and to gain time, had Riom ordered to join his regiment which was a part of Marshal Berwick's army. All the colonels had already gone and honour did not permit Riom to delay. He obeyed immediately, in spite of his mistress's tears. She was in despair over it and declared to her father, who came to see her a few days after, that she was resolved to announce her marriage; that she was a widow, mistress of herself and of her property; that she wished to dispose of them as she saw fit, and finally repeated all that Riom had told her about Mlle. de Montpensier. The Regent, tired of his daughter's fits of passion, gave her hopes, asked her for time and left her, well resolved not to return.

At the end of a few days, the princess, anxious

at not seeing her father, feared that the rarity of his visits might appear to be a diminution of credit, had him requested to come to supper at Meudon, where she wished to give him a reception. It was in the early days of May. The Regent having been unable to refuse her, she desired that the supper be given on the terrace, in spite of the remonstrances made her regarding the coolness of the night and the danger of a relapse, in a not very strong convalescence. This was precisely what made her persist, imagining that a night fête, and in the open air, would undeceive the public of the opinion that she had been delivered.

What had been predicted took place: fever took possession and no more left her. The Regent having excused the rarity of his visits on the plea of affairs, she decided to have herself conveyed to la Muette, where the proximity of Paris would induce her father to see her more frequently.

The journey from Meudon to la Muette aggravated still more the symptoms of her illness. She was so ill towards the middle of July that the terrible word death had to be spoken to her. She

was not frightened at it, had mass said in her room and received communion with open doors, as she would have given a state audience. Pride inspired or sustained her courage; for as soon as the ceremony was over, she had those present dismissed, and asked her intimates if that was not dying with grandeur. The same day, she had everyone withdraw, with the exception of the Mouchy woman, ordered her to bring her ring casket, which was worth more than two hundred thousand écus, and made her a present of it. The Mouchy woman, having received it without witnesses, feared that she might be accused of having stolen it, an accusation that her reputation would have been unable to destroy. She thought it proper therefore to declare it while the princess still lived and went with her husband to give an account of the matter to the Regent. The prince, as an answer, asked for the casket, took it, examined if nothing was missing, locked it in a drawer and dismissed her with an order not to return to la Muette.

During the two days which she still lived, the dying woman did not seem to notice the absence

of Mouchy; solely occupied with her last moments, without ostentation or feebleness, she asked for the last sacraments and received them in the presence of the curé of Passy, from Abbé de Castries, her first almoner, appointed at the time Archbishop of Tours, and who has been that of Albi since then. The physicians having no more hope, Garus' elixir was suggested; it was then first in vogue. Garus gave it himself and recommended specially that no purgative be given, as otherwise his elixir would become a poison. In a few moments, the patient seemed revived and her condition continued better until the following day; it is claimed that Chirac, from a physician's point of honour, which would sacrifice a patient rather than leave the glory of a cure to an empiric, made the patient take a purgative and immediately she changed for the worse and died during the night of the 20th and 21st of July. Garus charged murder against Chirac, who was not the least affected, looked at the empiric with cold contempt and left la Muette, where there was nothing else for him to do.

Thus ended, at twenty-four, the life of a

princess equally celebrated for her wit, beauty, charms, folly and vices. Her mother and grandmother heard of her death with more satisfaction than sorrow. The father was in the greatest grief; but, perhaps without giving it thought, he soon felt relieved to no longer have to bear the whims and angers of a mad-woman, and the persecution of an extravagant marriage. The princess was after all regretted by no one, because the pay and lodgings were continued to her entire household, with the exception of the Mouchy woman, who was exiled to her estate.

The Duc de Saint-Simon claims that at the opening of the body of the Duchesse de Berri it was found that she had already become enceinte. At all events, she had lost no time since her confinement. Saint-Simon must have been well informed, for his wife was present at the opening, as lady of honour of the princess.

The heart was taken to the Val-de-Grâce and her body to Saint-Denis. There was no holy water, no ceremony; the funeral was simple, and at the service those in charge prudently abstained from all orations. The King's mourning lasted

six weeks, and although the Court wears mourning out of respect only as long as the King, they wore it three months, as long as the Regent did, and the theatres were closed for a week.

A trifle can give another example of the princess's character. At the beginning of her illness, she dedicated her household to white for six months; and to accomplish that vow, she ordered coach, harness and livery in silver, wishing at least to exalt, by display, this devotion.

The daughter of the Duchesse de Berri and of the Comte de Riom, whom I saw in my youth, is at the present time a nun at Pontoise, with a pension of three hundred livres.

A death which did not create so great a sensation as that of which I have just spoken was the death of Mme. de Maintenon, whose name had, for thirty-five years, resounded throughout Europe. From the moment she had lost the King, she retired to Saint-Cyr and never left it again. She lived there with the equivocal etiquette of a dowager Queen. When the Queen of England went to dine with her, each one had her arm-chair; the young pupils of the house

waited upon them, and everything proclaimed equality. A few former friends of the old Court called on her, and always after having notified her in advance, so that she might appoint the day and hour. Beloved, feared and respected in the house, she divided her days between exercises of piety and the education of a certain number of pupils who were attached to her chamber.

The Duc du Maine was the only one who could call on her without asking her permission. He often paid his respects to her and was received with the tenderness of a mother. She was more affected by the degradation of this adopted son than she had been by the King's death. On learning that he was arrested, she gave way to her grief; she was seized with a fever, and, after lingering for three months, died at eighty-three years of age, Saturday, April 15th.

Meanwhile the army of France was stirring in Navarre. Fontarabie and Saint-Sébastien were taken and the army of Spain was not in condition to oppose ours. Her fleet had been beaten the year before by Admiral Bing, commander of the English fleet; and Captain Bing, son of Admiral

Bing, brought this news to Paris. He is the one who has since paid with his life the misfortune he had experienced before Mahon at the beginning of the present war. His blood justly or unjustly shed has been the cause of all the English victories. Whatever disasters we may have had, we could rise again some day, if we had learned from those rivals that it is necessary to reward and to punish.

While war was being waged on Spain, efforts were being made to discover those who had correspondence with Alberoni. The Regent did not wish that a formal proceeding be brought against the Duc and the Duchesse du Maine; but he also feared that he might be reproached of having had them arrested out of personal hatred. That is why he demanded that the Duchesse du Maine make a statement of the entire intrigue with Cellamarc and Alberoni. Whatever evasions she made use of in her confession, the fact still remained that the project was to bring about a rebellion against the Regent in Paris, the provinces and specially in Brittany, where the Spanish ships were to be received. To exonerate her husband, she declared that he was too timid to have her ever



confide to him a design of which he would have been afraid, and which he would surely have revealed. If the Duc du Maine was relieved at seeing himself justified, he can not have been much flattered at the reasons.

She however named all those who had taken part in the conspiracy, among whom were several Breton noblemen.

I have read the report of the trial of those who were executed at Nantes; I have conversed about this affair several times with some of the judges and with some of those who were hanged in effigy; I have never seen a plot so badly organised. Several did not even know what it was all about, or were not in accord with one another. The greater number only thought that there was to be a revolution, and promised to assist in it, and many had given their word and their signature without looking further into the matter. Some have confessed to me a piece of folly in which I would have thought it impossible to fall into were not their statements confirmed by the declaration of the Duchesse du Maine. They expected, they said, to carry away the King on one of his voyages to Ram-

bouillet, to take him to Brittany and to dictate terms to the Regent. In following the different links of this affair, a certain Breton found himself implicated whom the name of the Duchesse du Maine had never reached. One could not help but have compassion for certain accomplices whom I have seen, when one considered their little personal worth.

The Duc and the Duchesse du Maine were finally set free, and the Regent successively liberated all those who were in the Bastille for the same affair. It is very probable that he would have exercised the same clemency towards the Breton noblemen, had he not been persuaded to punish someone. A commission was therefore appointed which went to sit at Nantes to examine the case against the accused. Thus were the most innocent or at least the most excusable sacrificed.

Love of country will not make me partial, nor make me betray the truth, but I shall render justice to a province nobly attached to the King and who was appealing against the violation of its privileges. The people most jealous of their rights are the most attached to their duties and the dis-

satisfaction of the Bretons was well founded. The *Etats* had asked an accounting from Montaran, their treasurer; nothing was more just and interested the State less. The Regent, on the contrary, should have approved a conduct so regular. Unfortunately for the province, Montaran had a brother, captain in the guards, a great gambler and very well known. Such a subject is an interesting man at Paris. He made use of the credit of several women, who clearly proved that much consideration was due to the brother of a man so useful to society, and the *Etats* got the worst of their undertaking. After this, displeasure took hold of the good citizens and, if they ceased being such, the Regent should have blamed himself as having been the first cause, in sacrificing justice and order to the intrigues of women. We shall see the unfortunate outcome of this, when I shall have reported a few previous events, so as not to reverse too much the order of time.

The Duc de Richelieu was one of the first to obtain his liberty. He did not appear at Court at first, but after two or three months of voyages from one country place to another, he showed him-

self with a glamour of importance which imprisonment for an affair of State gave him, and the brilliant air of a young man who owes his freedom to love.

I shall sometimes have occasion to speak of him, if I continue these memoirs to the time I have in view. There will be seen a rather singular man, who always has sought notoriety, and has not succeeded in becoming celebrated, who, employed in negotiations and at the head of armies, has never been looked upon as a statesman, but as the leader of people of fashion of whom he has remained the dean.

The reader has seen in what his crime consisted. To understand what caused his absolution, it must be known that at the time of the bed of justice, Berthelot de Pléneuf, become rich in furnishing supplies for the army hospitals, fled to Turin. As his mind was not less inclined to intrigue than it was to business, he became intimate with office clerks, insinuated himself little by little with the ministers of that Court, and to create merit for himself which might secure a pleasant return to France, he undertook to negotiate the marriage

of Mlle. de Valois with the Prince de Piémont, son of King Victor. When he saw the proposition rather well received at Turin, he directed his wife, whom he had left in Paris, to inform the Regent, who favoured the marriage very much, and charged Abbé Dubois to follow up the matter. He could not have selected worse. The abbé, with the idea of making himself agreeable to the Emperor, whose protection was to procure for him the cardinal's hat, favoured the project which that prince had of taking Sicily from King Victor. He was therefore careful not to allow the Regent to enter into any engagement with the Court of Turin. He decided to show much enthusiasm for the success of the marriage, in fear that the negotiation might be given to someone else, and meanwhile to make it fail. He very cleverly made use of circumstances and of the knowledge he possessed of the character of Madame, the Regent's mother.

While negotiations were going on for the marriage of Mlle. de Valois, that princess had fallen in love with the Duc de Richelieu; the fatuity of the one, the giddiness of the other caused enough gossip to have the matter come to the ears of Ma-

dame. She received the information with as much of haughtiness as of virtue, kept her granddaughter with her as much as possible and had the Duc de Richelieu notified that, if he cared for his life, he had better stay away from where she was.

The Duc de Richelieu was prudent enough to profit by the advice; besides he had secured from the adventure what was to him the most precious fruit, the notoriety.

Abbé Dubois selected this moment to allow the negotiations about the marriage of the Prince de Piémont to transpire. This news reached Madame, who maintained a very friendly correspondence with the Queen of Sicily. In the humour in which she was towards her granddaughter, she found nothing better than immediately to write to the Queen that she was too much her friend to make her so bad a present as Mlle. de Valois. A few days after, and when the letter must have been to hand, Madame confessed to the Duc and the Duchesse d'Orléans the handsome act of frankness she had performed. The Duchesse d'Orléans was in despair; Mlle. de Valois cared but little, Abbé Dubois pretended to be angry and applauded

himself secretly for his rascally scheme; the Regent only laughed at his mother's German outburst and troubled himself but little about his wife's grief. However, he thought of disposing of his daughter, fearing that she might follow in the footsteps of the Duchesse de Berri, her sister, and although 'not over-delicate in the matter of the morals of his family, he wished to prevent errors still more striking in a young woman than in a widow, and was not long in concluding the marriage of Mlle. de Valois with the prince, son of the Duke of Modena, who was much honoured by this alliance; and, whatever reports may or may not have reached him about the princess, he had no right to be particular.

Mlle. de Valois did not make up her mind quite so easily; but she had to obey. She demanded at least, as a price of her sacrifice, the pardon of the Duc de Richelieu, who secured from love what he would have eventually obtained from the Regent.

At this time the Regent was much less engrossed by his domestic afflictions than by the

troubles of the Parliament. That assembly, at first dismayed at the bed of justice, had recovered from its stupefaction; its principle is to consider legal only those of the registerings that had been made freely and after examination.

'Registry is not, according to its maxims, a simple act of evidence; it thinks, without however saying it formally, that it sanctions a law which it registers, and that all that the King does on his own initiative and without freedom of suffrage, is void. I shall not launch into so delicate a discussion. Still, it is to be desired that there should be, to an absolute authority, a counterpoise to prevent it from becoming arbitrary.

I have at times sought to discuss these principles with men learned in our laws and in our history. One of the most enlightened and zealous parliamentarians whom I asked to point out to me the precise limit which separates usurpation from the rights of the Parliaments: "The principles in this matter," he replied, "are quite obscure, but as a fact, the Parliament is strong under a weak King, and weak under a strong King." An honest min-



ister would perhaps give the same reply if he were obliged to express himself on the royal power, as compared to the nation.

The Regent, much displeased at the Parliament's resistance against the operations of Law, had decided to get along without registry, but he did not the less feel the necessity of reckoning with public opinion because the public thinks much of Parliament. Yet Law had nothing to desire for the success of his system. The bank notes, the stocks, all the various papers were preferred to money which has a value set by all nations, while on the other hand, paper moneys, having an ideal value, are always susceptible to that which the imagination places upon them.

It would be hard to-day to make people understand the frenzy which possessed all minds. There are follies that are proper only while they are epidemic. Law, who foresaw better than any one else what the ending of his play would be, would have very much liked to strengthen it with the approbation of the Parliament, and by that to shelter its author from public prosecution. But the Regent always found the greatest opposition

in Parliament, perhaps as much against the novelty as against the folly of the system.

Law, having no longer hope to succeed with that assembly, conceived the project to destroy it. With the support of Dubois and of the Duc de la Force, he persuaded the Regent to reimburse in paper the prices paid for all magistrates' offices. The public, he claimed, would see with pleasure the venality of offices suppressed; the King would thus become master of the Parliament, and each position of president or of councilor would then only be a revocable appointment.

Whatever may be the venality of offices, one understands, after a careful examination, that it is as dangerous to suppress as to establish certain abuses.

The reimbursement of prices paid for offices, followed by the new plan of administration which was proposed, destroyed the magistracy, and of what necessity is it not in France? If the Parliament has at times unseasonably hampered the progress of the government, what services has it not rendered? Even those who composed the Parliament of the *Ligue* declared themselves, in

the midst of the Guises and the Spaniards, in favour of the principles of the monarchy. It is therefore the Parliament which has preserved the crown to the reigning house. However exaggerated may be his pretensions, if the King makes his power feared, it is the Parliament, which causes it to be respected. What advantage is it not for the King to have a Body whose principles, always subsisting, oppose themselves to the enterprises of the Court of Rome, even to those of the clergy of France, secular or regular? What an advantage for the subjects, that this same Body should be able to place obstacles in the way of the excesses of ministerial credit! The Parliament can make up for the weakness of a timid prince and enlighten a King powerful, but superstitious, against the suggestions of a fanatical confessor. On how many occasions can not a King allow a good act to be performed which his prudence prevents him from doing openly!

Although appointments to livings are not historical events, I shall speak of those which may have something strange in them. Abbé de la Tour-d'Auvergne was named to the archbishopric

of Tours. Abbé de Thésul, who was writing the list at the dictation of the Regent: "Ah, Monseigneur, what a subject!" he exclaimed, "beware of the scandal."

"What the devil!" replied the Regent; "I know it, but the Bouillons are persecuting me; I wish to rid myself of them; write ahead."

Thésul wrote. At the same time there was named as bishop of Sisteron, the Jesuit Laffiteau, chargé d'affaires at Rome, where he lived in the same manner as Nuncio Bentivoglio lived in Paris; so that before being consecrated, he was obliged to stay forty days at a surgeon's, which stay served him as a retreat in a seminary. He was one of the great supporters of the Constitution. This, however, is not what made him a bishop.

Abbé Dubois, having imparted to him the desire to become a cardinal, paid him in Rome to prepare the way for him. The Jesuit, who had the same aims, took the money and used it in his own interest. Rascals guess one another's aims: the abbé noticed it, and not being yet powerful enough to avenge himself in a manner which would have

revealed his designs, resolved to get rid of him, on the pretext of rewarding his services. Laffiteau, so different from the former bishops, became one, as they, in spite of himself.

Kept away from both Rome and the Court, he saw himself politely relegated to Sisteron.

Le Blanc, secretary of state, taking advantage of his credit, on the same occasion, caused the bishopric of Avranches to be given to Abbé Le Blanc, his brother, curate of Dammarville, an honest man, and good ecclesiastic.

Abbé Guérin de Tencin went to replace Laffiteau at Rome, so that people would not notice that anything had been lost in the change. The former, in many respects, was better than his predecessor. The son of a president in the Parliament of Grenoble, born with an attractive face and intelligence, specially that of intrigue, lacking the scruples and morality of his position, he reached the highest place, since he died Cardinal and Archbishop of Lyons.

He was excellently assisted in his career by a sister who was a canoness, who made but one with her brother, and who passed to him all the ambi-

tion she would have had, had her sex permitted it. She kept to herself only gallantry, which she has used as often as a means of success as for her pleasures. I knew her very well; one could not have more wit, and she always took possession of that of the person with whom she had to deal. The brother and sister had imagined a progressive system of flattery, and although they were indiscreet enough to confess it, and carried it to the verge of disgust, they were always successful with it. The genius of the cleverest intriguer vanished before that of the Tencin woman. She was very pretty while young, and retained in advanced age all the attractions of the mind. She was liked even by those who were not ignorant of her adventures.

Her parents made her a nun against her will in the Convent of Mont-Fleury, near Grenoble. In taking her vows, she thought of a means of breaking them, and her director was the blind instrument she used for her designs. He was a good ecclesiastic, very shallow, who fell in love with her without in the least suspecting it. The penitent made no mistake, cleverly profited by the foible of

the holy man, made him her zealous agent, secured from him the necessary information, and when matters reached the point she wished, she protested against her vows, and finally succeeded in going from her cloister to a chapter at Neuville, near Lyons, as canoness.

I have all these particulars from her personally. She soon was as free as she wished. The liking which Abbé Dubois took to her did the rest. I have heard it said that she had an intrigue with the Regent which did not last; she hurried too much to obtain her ends and disgusted the prince, who only took her as a passing fancy and said that he did not like p—s who speak of business between the sheets. She fell from the master to the valet and the influence which she acquired over Abbé Dubois consoled her. This was not her first affair; she already had had a child in 1717 by Destouches, commonly called Destouches-Canon.

She loved her brother, the Abbé de Tencin, very much, and his advancement became almost the sole object of her intrigues. Not in the least interested, she looked upon money as a means of success, and not as an aim worthy of satisfying her.

She never enjoyed more than a moderate income and wished riches only for her brother, so that it might assist him in his ambition. She was very serviceable when she had no contrary interests. Her great desire was to have the reputation of being a good friend or a declared enemy, cleverly took the opportunity to persuade people of this and thus attached to herself many persons of merit.

She did not require all her influence over Du-bois to interest him in favor of Abbé de Tencin. The former soon saw that the other was the workman he needed. He began by interesting him with an ecclesiastic operation which was not difficult and which yet was to make a noise. This was Law's conversion. This Scotchman already knew France well enough to realise that culprits who have held high places are seldom punished. Consequently, he wished to become controller-general. He could not secure this place without being naturalised nor be naturalised without being a Catholic. He claimed to be a Protestant and Abbé de Tencin was intrusted with this proselyte.

After the time supposedly required for such a



conversion, Law made his solemn renunciation at Melun, for fear that it might be taken as a joke in the capital, and Abbé de Tencin drew from this pious task many shares of stock and bank notes. Yet I see, in one of his letters to his sister, that he complains that his fortune does not respond to public opinion, and much regrets not to have justified it. However that may be, this sort of simony did not bring him into trouble, but he was informed against to the Parliament for another, by a certain Abbé de Vessière, and made a gigantic blunder in this proceeding, where he sat in person during the pleading. Aubry, the opposing counsel, having seemingly weakened in his allegations, Abbé de Tencin's lawyer wishing to take advantage of this, argued against a charge both vague and destitute of proof, and denied the simoniacal transaction. Aubry pretended to be embarrassed. The abbé thought to perform wonders by seizing the opportunity to confound the calumny and offered to purge himself of it by oath, if the Court permitted it. Immediately Aubry stopped him, said that there was no need of it and produced the original of the agreement. It was

most dramatic. The judges showed their indignation; hisses and shouts arose from those present; the abbé, confounded, tried to escape, but some charitable people hindered his passage and allowed him to go only after having exposed him to public view for some little time.

Abbé de Tencin, having nothing else to keep him in Paris, left for the Rome Embassy. I see in his letters that he never recovered from that affair. We shall soon see him at Rome, profiting by the lesson in prudence he had received in the Parliament, himself show how a signed agreement may be turned to account.

The motive which has caused me to speak of an appointment to livings, which demanded a few remarks, prompts me to linger a little over the naming of the cardinals of the same year. Belluga, Bishop of Murcia in Spain, was one. This prelate had rendered the greatest services to Philip V in the war of the succession. When this prince was obliged to flee his capital, Belluga exhorted the inhabitants of his diocese to fidelity and, combining to a pathetic sermon an example which was even more so, paid out of his own money two

months' pay to the soldiers, made the army subsist, in short, fired all the Spaniards with a heroism which returned the King to the throne. Belluga, thinking that he had only done his duty, did not appear at Court after the King's restoration, and in his diocese only busied himself with his episcopal duties.

We have seen that Alberoni, to defray the expenses of the war against the Emperor, had asked an indult from the pope through Philip V by virtue of which all ecclesiastic property was taxed. The tax was extended much beyond the indult. Belluga, looking upon the over-tax as a misuse of authority, refused to pay. The example of so respected a prelate was followed by the entire clergy. The pope, displeased at Philip V, revoked the indult, and the King, wishing on his own authority to continue to levy the assessment, uselessly threatened the Bishop of Murcia, who persisted in his refusal.

In these circumstances, the pope made a promotion of ten cardinals and included Belluga in it. This prelate declared that he would not accept without the permission of the King his master, who

was far from giving it. Philip V, considering this appointment as a personal insult, no sooner heard of it than he sent word to Belluga forbidding him to accept; but the refusal had forestalled the King's order. The pope, then more displeased than the prince, wrote to Belluga a brief, bearing the order to take the purple in virtue of holy obedience. Belluga replied to the Holy-Father that it was indifferent to religion whether he became cardinal or not, but that it was a part of a subject's duty to obey his prince. The pope threatened the prelate, who was no more affected by the Holy-Father's threats than he had been by those of the King about the tax, did not in the least pride himself of this at Court, and refused the hat as steadily as the assessment.

Several months after, an arrangement was made between the two courts, without Belluga interesting himself in it; then the King sent to Rome his nomination to the cardinalship in favor of Belluga, to whom he gave orders at the same time to accept. The cardinal came to Madrid, presented his hat to the King, received it at his hands and returned to his diocese.

One never would believe that such conduct was that of a Spanish prelate; here is the contrast in a French cardinal of the same promotion.

Mailly, of an ancient nobility of Picardy, born poor, and who remained thus a long time, had at last succeeded in becoming Archbishop of Arles and then of Reims. All he lacked to crown his fortune, was the cardinal's hat; and he had aspired to this from the time when he was hardly able to dress himself. He kept up a continued correspondence with those who held offices in Rome, and held the matter the more secret as he had almost been ruined during the reign of the late King for having written to the pope. It was then a State crime for an ecclesiastic to write to Rome except through the minister of foreign affairs or through the commission-bankers. It required, to save him and to have him appointed to Reims, all the influence of Father Tellier. But as soon as the Constitution had caused our principles to be forgotten and the Regent had permitted all licence, Mailly no longer constrained himself.

Jealous of the consideration enjoyed by Cardinal de Noailles, he undertook to distinguish him-

self in the opposition party, and soon left in it behind him the most fanatic partisans, whom he called lukewarm ones. He was so flattered to see one of his pastoral letters burnt by a decree of Parliament that he founded "a mass of thanksgiving, for having been worthy of participating in the opprobrium of Jesus Christ and of suffering for justice." He hoped that the Parliament might attack him in this matter, but it was so clear that he aspired to the title of martyr, whose crown would be the cardinal's hat, that as a punishment he was left in peace.

Still his outburst did wonders for him at Rome, and he finally won the pope's heart by requesting him to impart his sermons to him, "of which," he said, "people spoke with admiration." It was the sensitive spot of the good Clement XI, who prided himself on writing Latin in a superior manner, and that might well be, with the aid of Father Jouvency and others. The pope, delighted at finding at the same time so much religion and taste in Mailly, named him cardinal *proprio motu*.

The Regent, already much displeased with the archbishop, broke into a most violent anger, and

at once ordered Villeron, ensign of the gardes du corps, to go to Reims and forbid the archbishop from leaving there and from wearing the hat; to take it away if he saw it on him, and if he met him on the road to make him go back.

La Vrillière, nephew of the archbishop, had dispatched a courier to him to warn him of the Regent's anger, and avoid the imprudences which his infatuation for the hat might make him commit. This did not prevent him from leaving for Paris and he had already passed Soissons when Villeron met him. Fortunately the archbishop did not have his hat: he was too well warned. Villeron was very glad not to have to do any violence, notified him of his orders, exhorted him to turn back and after much parleying, took him back to Soissons, where they slept. The next day the question came up to continue on towards Reims. The archbishop said to Villeron that it was useless to escort him; that it would cause a disagreeable scandal; that the order was as good as carried out; that while he returned to Reims, Villeron could return to Paris and render an account to the Regent of the obedience with which

his orders had been received. Villeron gave in, but hardly had he left, when the archbishop followed him slowly enough so as not to catch up to him, and fast enough to reach Paris on the same day. There he went in hiding.

‘Abbé de la Fare, an active and talkative intriguer, always sure of everything, hard to disconcert and an ideal man to endure Abbé Dubois’ first broadside, came to the latter in the name of the archbishop, whose grand vicar he was. Dubois, enraged at seeing two French cardinals named at the same time, feeling that a third hat, to which he aspired without yet daring to say so, would only be the more difficult to obtain, had himself aroused the Regent’s anger. From this one can imagine how he received La Fare. The storm was violent: La Fare allowed it to pass entirely; then, with an affectionate air, he set forth to Abbé Dubois that it was not proper in a man of his merit, a great minister as he was, worthy of being a cardinal, to oppose the favours of the pope, begged him to think the matter over, and withdrew.

Abbé Dubois profited by the advice, under-



stood that sooner or later he would have to reconcile himself to that affair, and that it was much better to make a merit of it at Rome than to leave it to others. Besides he was flattered at the Abbé de la Fare thinking him worthy of the purple! The project was then natural; but he must put no obstacles in the way.

He sent for Abbé de la Fare, and, without changing too quickly from the fury of the evening before to clumsy endearments, he exhibited only a little ill-humour and embarrassment. La Fare saw through him, resolved to meet him half way by quickly making up his mind: "Monsieur," said he to him, "I am going to speak frankly to you; I have no resentment for the rough way in which you treated me yesterday; I saw very well that you spoke to me as minister. You, great statesmen, can not do otherwise; but you certainly are not sorry to do something agreeable to the pope, of whom you will shortly have need, for it is easy to see that you can not fail to have the hat soon." Then La Fare launched forth into praise, with an affected simplicity of which the minister was the dupe. Abbé Dubois, much pleased at the

opening which La Fare gave him to get out of difficulty, said to him smiling: "You are too clear-sighted, abbé: I must confess that you have guessed my wishes; let me pacify M. le Regent; only send word to your archbishop to come here secretly, and remain concealed until he hears from me; it will not be long." Our two rascals embraced, praised one another on their respective penetration and separated well pleased with one another, each applauding himself. La Fare, however, had more reason than Dubois. It was finally agreed that the archbishop would go secretly to the Palais-Royal, would offer the Regent the most respectful apologies; from there would return to Reims, that when there he would take neither the title, nor insignia of the dignity of cardinal; that, in all his letters addressed to the interior of the kingdom, he would sign only *Archbishop of Reims*, with permission, however, to sign *Cardinal de Mailly* in those that he should write to foreign lands.

All was exactly carried out. The archbishop, having returned to Reims, languished there more than three months, with the consolation of daily

drawing from his pocket the precious calotte, of looking at it, of pressing it to his lips, of trying it on before the mirror, dying of impatience to wear it in public.

The Regent wished to make the best of this situation to secure, if not peace, at least a truce in the Church. The Cardinal de Noailles had just given a synopsis of a doctrine approved by Cardinals de Rohan and de Bissy, and which they yet had the art of causing to fail later, by a priestly trick. It was necessary to have the absent prelates sign the work. Care should be taken not to forget the Archbishop of Reims, whose signature would make the greater impression on the others as he was known to be an enemy of Cardinal de Noailles; and that caused a refusal to be feared.

Abbé Dubois proposed this commission to La Fare, who had remained in Paris as negotiator for his archbishop. La Fare raised as an objection the difficulty of obtaining the signature of a man who had been left for so long in a humiliating position. He added that the only thing to do, to induce him to sign, was to grant him the in-

signias of his dignity, and give him at the same time a distinction which might make amends for the treatment received. The synopsis of the doctrine was brought to the other prelates only by ecclesiastics of the second class; La Fare suggested that it be sent by Languet, Bishop of Soissons, first suffragan of Reims; we shall see why.

The Regent consented to this but to flatter the archbishop's vanity, and at the same time assure himself of the signature, he gave Languet two sealed letters. In one he ordered the archbishop to sign at once, or else he must renounce his hat forever and spend his life in exile. In the second he exhorted him to sign in the most flattering terms, leaving him full liberty, however, and assuring him that, whether he refused or accepted, he could come and receive his calotte at the King's hands. The archbishop, on reading these two letters, was soon decided. He signed everything asked for, showed the second letter to everyone, suppressed the first, and came to enjoy the object of his desires, by receiving the calotte.

The design of La Fare, in proposing Languet, had not only been to honour Cardinal de Mailly,

but to increase his triumph by humiliating the prelate who had most opposed the promotion. If the purple were the reward of fanaticism, Languet was not wholly wrong in being jealous. Mailly had had one charge burnt by the hand of the executioner, but Languet had had two. His zeal was not cooled by this; he continued to serve Rome while disturbing the Church, and finally died, without a calotte, more than thirty years after.

The promotion of ten cardinals did not make as much noise in Europe as the downfall of Alberoni.

We have seen the care he took in keeping away from Madrid all the Parmesans so as to have no witnesses of his low origin, or for fear that they might find it easier than others to reach the Queen. He was however unable to prevent that princess from sending for her nurse, Laura Piscatori, whom she made her *assafeta*, or *première femme de chambre*, a position more distinguished in Spain than in France, where still it gives the credit which always follows domestic intimacy.

Laura, a peasant woman as shrewd as she was boorish, knowing all that Alberoni had done to

prevent her from being sent for, was not the dupe of the outward consideration of the minister; she noticed the hatred and returned it. The cardinal in an underhanded manner insinuated to the Queen the distance she should hold in the confidence between herself and her nurse. Laura, without entering in these fine distinctions, brutally attacked the minister, did not sharpen her shafts, but delivered crushing blows.

The Regent wished to rid himself of Alberoni, his personal enemy. Abbé Dubois, informed by his spies of the influence of Laura over the Queen of Spain, and knowing, by his over his master, how powerful that force is, undertook to make use of it to overthrow the minister. He had offered to Laura all the money she might wish, for she could not lay claim to anything else from his bounty. Therefore interest united with hatred determined the nurse. It was difficult to persuade her that the good of the State corresponded with hers. Whatever advantageous idea Alberoni could have given of his projects to Their Catholic Majesties, it was impossible for him to hide his lack of success: the fleet destroyed, towns

taken, troops beaten or compelled to intrench themselves, a King without allies, obliged to sustain a war both ruinous and unfortunate against the foremost powers, the projects of the minister, great, if you will, but without satisfactory means, and therefore senseless.

Laura profited by all her advantages, pointed out to the Queen, and through her to the King, the ambition and folly of Alberoni.

It is a fortunate thing when princes judge, as the people, ministers and generals by their success: it is the best way. The Queen, dismayed at these disasters, humiliated at her choice, became disgusted with her minister, and as all the manifestoes of the countries in league against Spain attacked only Alberoni directly, she thought, in sacrificing him, to place the honour of the monarchy in safety; and Alberoni received, through a note from Philip V, orders to leave Madrid within twenty-four hours, and in two weeks Spanish dominion, with prohibition to see anyone, to write to the King or Queen or to anyone else. At the same time he was placed in charge of an

officer of the gardes du corps, who was to see him as far as the frontier.

At Barcelona, the King's lieutenant gave him an escort of fifty horsemen who were of much use to him; for two hundred bandits having attacked him at Trenta-Passos, the cardinal, at the head of the escort and of his servants, faced the brigands and succeeded in driving them away.

While Alberoni was going away, it was discovered at Madrid that he was taking away some important papers, and among these the will of Charles II which instituted Philip V heir to the monarchy. He apparently intended to gain the Emperor's protection by turning over to him so precious a document. Men were dispatched after him and violence had to be resorted to to search him; but the detachment that had defended him against the bandits, then obeying the King's orders, the officer had the cardinal's baggage and chests opened. All, including his person was carefully examined. The will and almost all his papers were seized; and the officer, until that moment respectful for the cardinal, treated him



as a military executioner, and left him, sending him, in formal terms, *à tous les diables*. Never had victory caused greater rejoicing in Spain than did the minister's disgrace: each one proclaimed all he knew or knew not. Acts of ministerial despotism are always so common that one is not reduced to cite unjustly. The King was the only one who knew nothing of them; the Queen must have known of them, but, for her honour's sake, she pretended to hear of them for the first time. The foreign powers on this occasion congratulated Their Catholic Majesties, and from that moment peace was considered assured.

The manner in which Alberoni had been searched and the insults he still feared from Spain caused him to hasten his march towards France and enter there even before he had received the passport for which he had sent.

Chevalier de Marcieu, who had known him well before his success, received orders to go and meet him on the frontier, under the pretext of politeness and the safety of his person, without permitting, however, that the usual honours be rendered him. He was also to try to get him to

speak about the affairs of Spain, the King, the Queen, the existing ministry, and upon all subjects of importance to us, and to leave him only on his embarking at Antibes, from whence he expected to go into Italy.

The cardinal, on seeing the Chevalier de Marcieu come to meet him, at once understood what his mission was and frankly told him so. Marcieu denied it, and although the cardinal knew what to think of his presence, he did not restrain himself in speaking of the King and Queen, whom he termed ingrates. "If the Queen," he said, "who has the devil in her, finds a good general, she will disturb Europe: she easily controls her husband who, as soon as he has said in low tones: 'I want to be the master,' ends by obeying, and who only requires a devotion-chair and a woman." He added that he, Alberoni, far from having caused the war, had always been opposed to it; that he had had no share in the conspiracy of the prince; that the Duc du Maine had not appeared in it; but that the duchesse was a wicked she-devil, and that the majority of her partisans whom he would never name, was not worth an

*écu* of good silver; that the landing in Brittany was a folly which he had always condemned, that he had even thwarted the embarkation in Spain; that he would everywhere be for M. le Regent as that prince would wish him to be; and that all papers against the Regency had always been written in France. He claimed that the ministry he left in Spain would from then on be composed only of ignoramuses, compelled to have consideration for all those who were near a weak King. He did not doubt but that an attempt had been made to have him assassinated by the brigands, by obliging him to pass through Catalonia, whose rebellion he had suppressed and punished, instead of allowing him to leave by way of Pampeluna, as he had asked to be permitted to do.

Chevalier de Marcieu, in pursuance of his orders, had the Custom department of Narbonne secretly requested to scrupulously examine the cardinal's baggage, on the pretext of seeing if he had nothing dutiable. Only twelve hundred pistoles were found and no jewels of value. In view of his style of living later in Rome, he must

have had considerable sums invested in foreign countries.

He wanted to make people believe that he was poor, but that he cared little, as the only relatives he had were a nephew whom he had made a priest, and a niece whom he was making a nun. These details and a few others are to be found in the letters of Chevalier de Marcieu, from January 6, 1720, and the following days until the 1st of February, when he saw the cardinal embark at Antibes, on a Genoese galley. Before leaving he gave to the chevalier a paper and a letter in which he offered to wage a most dangerous war on Spain. The Regent did not honour him with a reply.

Alberoni went from Antibes to Leghorn, and betook himself to Parma, where he received all the honours due to his dignity, by order of the Duke of Parma, whose subject he was born. This vain etiquette did not console him for having no other place of refuge than among his countrymen, who had despised him in his extraction, been jealous of him in his rise, hated him in the misuse of his power, which the Italians express by

*prepotenza*, and who exulted in his overthrow. He left Parma and was for more than one year a wanderer, a fugitive, as if exiled from the whole earth.

Respect of the Roman purple did not seem to him a sufficient protection in Rome against the resentment of the pope, whom he had treated insolently. It was only in 1721 that he went to Rome, at the conclave which followed the death of Clement XI.

Alberoni's greatest grief was not to have obtained the bulls of the Archbishopric of Sevilla, after having resigned the bishopric of Malaga; and, as if he had the right to call Heaven to witness, he at times broke out in great anger, exclaiming that the pope, the Emperor and Their Catholic Majesties would answer for it to God. It is certain that, had he been in possession of an important see, he could, assisted by Spanish superstition, have contended against the royal power.

The Regent, assured of peace without, did not enjoy the same quiet within the State; the illusion of the system was beginning to disappear. People came gradually to understand that all paper

riches were but ideal, if they were not based on real funds, and that operations which may be proper under certain conditions to a free people, are pernicious in a monarchy where the misuse of power depends on a mistress or on a favourite. The profusions of the Regent delighted the Court or ruined the nation. The great people paid their debts with paper, which was only a legal bankruptcy. That which was the fruit of the toil and industry of a whole people became the prey of the idle and greedy courtiers.

The paper soon lost all vogue, by its superabundance only: an attempt was made to convert it into specie.

For want of coin currency, people bought, at any price, specimens of the goldsmith's art, pieces of furniture and generally all that could retain a real value after the decline of the papers. All being equally eager, everything became unbelievably expensive, and the rarity of specie caused it to be more and more closely kept. The government, seeing the frenzy passed, and that there was no longer a possibility of beguiling, made use of violence. Gold, silver, precious

stones were forbidden. It was not allowed to have more than five hundred *livres* in specie. Searches were instituted even in religious establishments. Confiscations took place: the informers were encouraged and rewarded. Valets betrayed their masters, the citizen became the spy of the citizen: which caused Lord Stairs to say that no one could doubt the Catholicity of Law since he had established the inquisition, after having already proved *transubstantiation*, by the changing of specie into paper.

Even though the system might not have been pernicious in itself, the abuse would have destroyed its principles. There was no longer any plan nor determined object, for the ills of the moment a remedy was being blindly sought, and this remedy became a greater evil. The decrees, the statutes multiplied, the same day saw some appear which annulled others.

Never more capricious government, never more frenzied despotism were seen under a Regent less firm. The most inconceivable of the prodigies for those who were witnesses of those times, and who to-day look on it as a dream, is that a sud-

den revolution was not the outcome; that the Regent and Law did not end tragically. They were held in horror, but the people contented themselves with murmuring; a gloomy and timid despair, a stupid consternation had seized all: minds were too debased to be capable of courageous crimes.

One could hear of nothing but worthy families ruined, secret poverty, shameful fortunes, new-rich astonished at and unworthy of being, contemptible nobles, senseless pleasures, scandalous luxury.

The facility, the necessity even of carrying on one's person considerable sums in paper, to negotiate them, rendered robberies very common; assassinations were not rare. There was one whose just and necessary punishment caused a sensation throughout a large portion of Europe.

Antoine-Joseph, Comte de Horn, aged twenty-two, a captain on half-pay in the *cornette blanche*; Laurent de Mille, from Piedmont, a captain on half-pay in the regiment of Brehenne-Allemand, and an alleged Chevalier d'Estampes plotted to assassinate a rich speculator and to steal his



wallet. They went to rue Quincampoix and, on the pretext of negotiating one hundred thousand écus of stock, took the broker to a tavern in the rue de Venise, on March 22, Passion Friday, and stabbed him. The unfortunate broker, in his struggles, made enough noise so as to be heard by a tavern boy who was passing the door, the key of which was on the outside. The boy opened the door, and, seeing a man covered with blood, closed it again, locked it, and shouted, "Murder!"

The assassins, seeing themselves locked in, jumped from the windows. D'Estampes, who was on watch on the stairs, had run away at the first shout and hastened to a lodging house in rue de Tournon, where the three dwelt, took the things he could most easily carry and fled. Mille went through the whole crowd in the rue Quincampoix, but, followed by the people, he was stopped at the Halles. The Comte de Horn was arrested as he fell from the window. Believing his two accomplices safe, he had enough presence of mind to say that he had almost been killed in trying to defend the man who had just been

murdered. His plan was not very well arranged and became useless on the arrival of de Mille, who was brought back to the tavern and who confessed all. Comte de Horn in vain tried to ignore him, the commissary of police ordered him taken to prison. The crime being proven, the trial was not long, and on Holy Tuesday, March 26, both were broken on the wheel on the Place de Grève.

Comte de Horn was apparently the instigator of the plot, for before the execution and while he still breathed on the wheel, he asked the pardon of his accomplice, who was executed last and who died under the blows.

I have heard from the prison chaplain a circumstance which well proves the resignation and calmness of Comte de Horn. Having been turned over to the chaplain, while awaiting the doctor of the Sorbonne, the confessor, he said to him: "I deserve the wheel; I had hope that out of consideration for my family, the penalty would be changed to decapitation; I am resigned to all so as to obtain the pardon of my crime from God." He added immediately: "Do people

suffer much on the wheel?" The chaplain, taken aback at this question, merely replied that he thought not, and spoke to him in as consoling a manner as he could.

The Regent was besieged on all sides for a pardon, or at least a commutation of sentence. The crime was so atrocious that people did not insist about the first; but entreaties on the second redoubled. It was maintained that the punishment on the wheel was so degrading that no daughter of the house of Horn could enter any chapter before the third generation.

The Regent rejected all prayers for pardon. An attempt was made to influence him on the plea that the condemned had the honour of being related to him through Madame: "Well!" said he, "I shall share the disgrace; that should console the other relatives." He quoted on that occasion the line of Corneille.

"Le crime fait la honte et non pas l' échafaud."

A true and moral maxim, and untrue in our customs. In a State where consideration depends on birth, on rank, on credit and on fortune, all

of these means of impunity, a family who cannot screen from justice a guilty relative, is convicted of having no standing, and consequently is despised; the prejudice must then exist. But it does not occur, or at least it is more feeble under an absolute despotism or among free people, wherever it may be said: You are a slave as I am or I am free as you are. Under a despotic government, the condemned man is supposedly only guilty of having offended. In a free country the guilty is sacrificed only to justice; and when it will respect no one the majority of families will have their hanged-man, and consequently will require indulgence, and reciprocal compassion. Then the wrongs being personal, prejudice will disappear: there is no other way of extinguishing it.

The Regent was almost persuaded to commute the sentence: but Law and Abbé Dubois made him see the necessity of maintaining public safety in a time where everyone carried his whole fortune. They proved to him that the people would in no way be satisfied and would feel humiliated at the distinction of punishment for a crime so awful

and so public. I have often heard this execution discussed and have never heard it condemned but by the nobles — interested parties — and I may say that I have never concealed my sentiments in their presence.

When the relatives or allies had lost all hope of moving the Regent, Prince de Robec-Montmorency and the Marshal d'Isenghen of to-day, to whom the condemned was more nearly related than to others, found a means of entering his prison, brought him poison, and exhorted him to escape, by taking it, the disgrace of his punishment: but he refused. "Go, wretch," said they with indignation on leaving him; "you are only worthy of dying at the executioner's hand!"

I have the principal circumstances of the case from the court clerk who imparted the proceedings to me.

Comte de Horn was, before his last crime, known as a swindler, and in every respect a worthless fellow. His mother, daughter of Prince de Ligne, Duc d'Arenberg, Spanish Grandee and chevalier of the Golden Fleece, and his elder brother, Maximilien Emmanuel, Prince de Horn,

informed of the evil ways of the unfortunate, had sent a nobleman to pay his debts, bring him back if willing or obtain from the Regent an order driving him out of Paris; unhappily he only reached Paris on the morrow of the crime.

It has been claimed that the Regent, having adjudged the confiscation of the goods of Comte de Horn to Prince de Horn, his brother, the latter wrote the following letter :

“I do not complain, Monseigneur, of my brother's death, but I complain that Your Royal Highness should have violated in his person the rights of the kingdom, of the nobility and of the nation.” (The reproach is ill founded, premeditated murder is punished by the wheel, without distinction of birth.) “I thank you for the confiscation of his goods; I should consider myself as infamous as he should I ever accept any favours from you. I trust that God and the King will one day render you justice as exactly as you have rendered it to my unhappy brother.”

At the time when the Regent was holding up Comte de Horn to public reprobation, he was having sacrifice made in Brittany to the tranquillity

of his regency. On the same day, March 26th, the royal chamber established at Nantes had four Breton nobles beheaded for the crime of lèse-majesté and felony. Sixteen of them were hanged in effigy and a large number of other cases were settled by an amnesty. I have already spoken of this affair. All these unfortunate gentlemen, the majority of whom did not know what it was all about, were the victims of the allurements of Cellamare and of the Duchesse du Maine's folly. I shall add but few circumstances.

The entire city was filled with troops: the bourgeois were prohibited from leaving their houses: the cannon of the château were turned towards the city. Montlouis, on mounting the scaffold, seeing the tears of those about, said to them: "My compatriots, we die for you; pray God for us." D'Evry, who reported the case and who has just died, has said several times that he expected a pardon, after having seen the Duchesse du Maine freed: which proves sufficiently that she was the real culprit.

The Regent, not knowing how to provide for the payment of the *rentes* and pensions of which



THE DUCHESSE DU MAINE





his liberalities daily increased the number, had ordered, by a decree of the council dated February 6th, the reimbursement in paper or the reduction to two per cent of all those *rentes*. By the edict of the month of March following, all the settlements of *rente* were fixed at the same percentage as if the value of money did not depend solely on its rarity or on its abundance. The prince can fix the legal rate of interest; but he cannot constrain the lenders. The Parliament refused to register the decree as well as the edict, and made remonstrances which only established the right of making them, and their uselessness. The premier president, not yet recovered from his interview with the Regent, pretended to be ill, so as not to find himself in opposition either with the prince or with the Parliament. We shall see him reappear when he finds the opportunity favourable to him. This was not long in presenting itself.

All the members of the Court, encumbered with debts, had freed themselves from them with paper which had only cost them baseness. The honest bourgeoisie was ruined and unheard-of violences were practised on the common people in connec-

tion with Mississippi (to-day Louisiana). Law, seeing clearly that a foundation must be given to his stocks, at least a fictitious one, made use of the alleged riches which would be secured from Mississippi. It was, he said, a land of promise, abounding in provisions of all kinds, in gold and silver mines. All that was required was to send colonists there, who, in enriching themselves, would also be the builders of the fortune of France.

This bait not being successful, all the rascals and prostitutes were taken by force from the prisons and reformatories and made to embark. Then those without occupation were seized; and as those who are employed to purge a city of scoundrels are hardly any better themselves, on the pretence of vagrancy, many honest artisans and sons of bourgeois were taken. The police detained some illegally, and made them buy their liberty. Excesses were carried so far that the patience of the people tired of them. The police were repulsed, some were killed, and the minister, intimidated in turn, had these odious persecutions discontinued. It was learned later that almost

all the unfortunates, taken by force, turned over for sole subsistence to the charity of the provinces which they were made to cross, had perished on the way, during the crossing or in the colony.

The Regent and Law no longer knowing what recourse to take to face the royal bills, the council on the 21st of May rendered the famous decree which reduced them all to one-half their value. The clamour was general when it was seen, by this reduction, how little faith one could place on the other half.

The premier president, seeing that the Regent had lost ground, and that all the citizens were in a state of fury, reappeared on the scene and assembled the Parliament; but the Regent on the 27th sent La Vrillière, secretary of state, to suspend all deliberation, and announce a new decree of the council which was issued the next day to again give the bills their full value.

The blow had been struck. Confidence is inspired by degrees, but a moment destroys it and it is then well nigh impossible to restore it; therefore did it not return. The Regent was himself so frightened at the clamour, and rumours, that

he attempted to cast all the public hatred on Law by taking from him the administration of the finances; and when he was brought to the Palais-Royal, he publicly refused to see him, but that very evening, he had him come in through a secret door, to offer him some consolation and excuses. As the conduct of this prince was as uneven as it was inconsistent, two days after he took Law with him to the Opera; but, to protect him from the fury of the people, he gave him a guard of Swiss from his own house. The precaution was not useless: Law had been pelted with stones while in his coach, and had he been at the least distance from his residence, he would have been stoned to death. His wife and daughter almost had the same fate on the public drive, where they had the imprudence of showing themselves, without considering that the multitude is not made up of courtiers. Besides, the fact of being a foreigner in France and in any other country, does much to aggravate the wrongs of a minister. Had Richelieu been an Italian, he might perhaps have among us, in spite of the eulogies of the Academy, as bad a reputation

as Cardinal Mazarin, although of another sort.

The Regent was just enough to himself to feel that he was more to blame than Law. The latter took refuge at the Palais-Royal, because the attack of the populace was several times renewed against him. He imputed the failure of his system to the keeper of the seals who, forced to relinquish the administration of the finances, had hindered all its operations and counselled the decree of May 21st.

Dubois, for whom the system had procured so much money, and who still hoped for more, seconded Law in his resentment; and both induced the Regent to re-appoint Chancellor d'Aguesseau. Law, and Chevalier de Conflans, first gentleman of the Regent's chamber, went together to get him at Frêne, while Dubois went, on behalf of the Regent, to ask d'Argenson for the seals which were returned to the chancellor, whose reputation was so damaged by having been brought back by Law that it recovered its original splendour with difficulty.

The honours of keeper of the seals were continued to d'Argenson. These distinctions and the

pecuniary fortune he had acquired (for he was born very poor) did not save him the sickness of disgraced ministers, a sort of spleen which takes possession of them and of which almost all perish.

From the moment that the controllership was taken from Law, who only retained the Bank and the *Compagnie des Indes*, Pelletier des Forts was appointed commissary general of finances and had as assistants, Ormesson and Caumont.

The Regent, to gain the public favour or reduce its hatred, at first appeared to connect the Parliament with his operations. By decree of the council dated June 1st, it was permitted to have any amount of money in one's house that one might wish, but few were in a position to avail themselves of the permission. Five members of Parliament were allowed to confer with the commissioners of finances. So as to withdraw the bank notes, there were issued twenty-five millions of *rentes* on the city, whose stock was at two and a half per cent, and the settled bills were publicly burned at the Hôtel de Ville. But this did not give to individuals the money necessary for their pressing and daily needs. The

most common provisions had gone up to excessive prices and the notes being refused by all dealers, it was necessary for the Bank to distribute some little money to the holders of notes; the crowd at the Bank was so great that several persons were smothered. Three dead bodies were carried to the Palais-Royal. This sight made such an impression that it almost caused an uprising in Paris.

Le Blanc, secretary of state, hastened to the palace, summoned the watch and the Tuileries guards; but while awaiting their arrival he came to a quick decision and perceiving seven or eight powerful men quite liable to take part in a popular uprising, and even to cause one: "My friends," said he to them quietly, "take these bodies, carry them to a church, and return at once to me to be paid." He was obeyed on the spot and the troops which arrived dispersed by their sole presence the multitude which no longer had before its eyes corpses capable of causing so great an impression. A part of the populace had already left the Palais-Royal to follow the bodies which were being carried away, either through aimless curiosity, or to



participate in the promised reward. The same day an ordinance was issued prohibiting the people from assembling under penalty of the law.

The government was so depraved that no honest man had any confidence in it. For some days past the notes collected from the public were burned at the Hôtel de Ville; Trudaine, mayor of Paris, in whose presence this was done, thought he saw numbers which had already gone through his hands and rather bluntly manifested his suspicions. Trudaine was an upright man, full of honour and justice, of severe habits, trained in the spirit and in the principles of the ancient magistracy, an enemy of innovations, and more so of those which seemed doubtful to him. His son, with greater wisdom, rather resembles him; it is a good family.

The suspicions of the mayor of Paris may have been ill founded; but they were so much like the truth, his position exerted such an influence on public confidence that the Regent took the office away from him and gave it to Châteauneuf. It was uselessly argued that it was in opposition to all rules to replace a mayor before the expiration of

his term, and against all municipal laws, to put a foreigner in the place; that this injustice done to a worthy man and one dear to the people spread distrust, instead of destroying it. Rules had but little interest for the Regent; so Trudaine was deposed.

Stock 'gambling, too confined in rue Quincampoix, had been transferred to the Place Vendôme. There assembled the vilest scoundrels and the greatest lords, all united and become equal through greed. But few were mentioned at Court as having preserved themselves from the contagion; among these were Marshal de Villeroi and de Villars, the Ducs de Saint-Simon and de la Rochefoucault. Marshal de Villars, braggart even of the qualities which he possessed, crossing the Place one day in a brilliant coach loaded down with pages and lackeys, attempted, for his vanity's sake, to turn his disinterestedness to account. His progress being delayed by the crowd, he put his head out of the coach window, and declaimed against the shame of stock gambling, the disgrace of the nation, adding that as to himself he was perfectly irreproachable as to money. There im-

mediately arose from those about a general shout: "How about protection! How about protection!" which the marshal had turned to great account when in command of the army.

These cries which were repeated from one end of the Place to the other, awed the marshal into silence, caused him to sink back into his coach, and pass on as best he could.

M. le duc, boasting candidly one day of the quantity of *actions* (shares of stock) which he possessed, Turmenies, guard of the royal treasury, a man of wit, and who had acquired a right or a habit of familiarity even with the princes, said to him: "Monseigneur, two of your grandfather's *actions* (deeds) are worth more than all those." M. le duc laughed at this for fear of being obliged to get angry at it. This same Turmenies, being present on the occasion of the return of the Comte de Charolais, after three years of travel, was eager with many others to show his delight. This prince hardly looked at those present, whereupon Turmenies turned towards those about him and said: "Gentlemen, spend much money to

have your children travel: this is the way they return! ”

On arriving, Comte de Charolais entered the regency council and did not strengthen it. The chancellor, finding himself disturbed by the tumult of stock gambling in the Place Vendôme, where the chancellery is, Prince de Garignan, more greedy for money than delicate as to its source, offered his Hôtel de Soissons. He caused to be built in the garden a quantity of small booths each of which was rented for five hundred livres a month; the whole brought five hundred thousand livres a year. So as to compel the jobbers to make use of them, he secured an ordinance which, on the pretext of having the stock gambling policed and of preventing the loss of pocket-books, forbade the doing of any business outside of these booths.

The Parliament, since its deputies conferred with the commissaries of finances, already flattered itself with participating in the administration; this illusion did not last. An edict granting privilege of all commerce to the Compagnie des Indes was

brought to the Parliament to be registered, July 17, on the very day some persons were smothered. While this affair was being warmly discussed, the premier president went out a moment, reported on returning what had occurred at the Bank, and that Law's coach had been broken to pieces. All the magistrates arose as one man, with a cry of joy unworthy of the gravity of the sitting: "And Law, is he torn to pieces?" The premier president replied that he was ignorant of the outcome of the tumult. The entire Assembly rejected the edict and broke up the meeting to hasten to get news.

The Regent, incensed at the little complacency of the Parliament, called a secret council on Thursday the 18th, at which council it was resolved to transfer the Parliament to Blois. The chancellor voted for this as the others with the embarrassment of a man bored of exile, and who fears to return to it. He succeeded, however, after the meeting, in having the Regent change the place to Pontoise, instead of Blois.

On Sunday, the 21st, without anything having transpired, several companies of guards as early

as four o'clock in the morning took possession of the courtyards and of the exterior of the palace; a party of musketeers occupied the large hall, and others the residence of the premier president, while their comrades brought to all the magistrates an order to betake themselves to Pontoise.

This transfer of Parliament to a distance of seven leagues from Paris, far from restoring authority, rendered it ridiculous and became a comic scene through the circumstances which accompanied it. That very evening, the Regent caused to be taken to the Attorney General, one hundred thousand livres in money and as much in notes to aid those who might have need of it. The premier president had a sum even larger to maintain his table and drew, at different times, more than five hundred thousand livres from the Regent, so that the Pontoise session became a sort of pleasure vacation.

The premier president kept open table, and those who, for reasons of inconvenience or otherwise, desired to remain in their abiding places, sent to the *première présidence* to secure what

they wished. In the afternoon, gaming-tables in the apartments, barouches all ready in the courtyard for those who preferred to take a drive. The premier president entered the most elaborate, and from there named, among those present, those whom he wished to accompany him; consequently, *Messieurs* considered that the premier president was the greatest man in his position.

In the evening, a delicate and sumptuous meal for all the beautiful women and the men of fashion who, in the fine season, came daily from Paris and returned there at night. The fêtes, the concerts, followed one another continually. The road to Pontoise was as popular as that of Versailles is to-day. It might perhaps not have been impossible to bring the Regent there. He contributed to the pleasures of these exiles who made of them jests more indecent than light. Hardly any questions were considered, and only the litigants suffered.

The Chamber of Accounts, the Court of Aids, the Grand Council and the University sent deputies to Pontoise to compliment the Parliament. An entry was made of this, and, on the 15th of

August, the Chamber of Accounts and the Court of Aids affected at the procession of the vow of Louis XIII to leave the Parliament's place empty.

The Parliament returned to Pontoise on the 15th of November. Before proposing the declaration, several days were taken up in winning over Abbé Pucelle, and when he had been conferred with as to the modifications which he wished in the registry, to protect the appellants from all violence, no further obstacle was found.

In the most numerous assemblies, there are hardly more than two or three persons who decide everything; which proves that there is no body which does not incline to monarchy. The Parliament registered the declaration on the 4th of December, was recalled on the 16th and on the 20th resumed its functions at Paris.

Cases had so accumulated owing to the little work done by the Parliament at Pontoise, that the Chamber established at the Augustins continued to judge many of them, even since the Parliament's return, and distinguished itself by its quickness and integrity.

The recall of the Parliament decided the ex-



pulsion of Law, who prudently left two days before the return, in a carriage with the arms of M. le duc, accompanied by a few valets wearing that prince's livery, which acted as a sort of protection, and, to provide for emergencies, supplied with the Regent's passports. This did not hinder the elder d'Argenson, commissary of Maubeuge, from stopping him on his passage through Valenciennes, and of sending word of this by a messenger who was returned to him at once with a sharp reprimand for not having paid deference to the passports.

Law was a Scotchman, nobleman or not, but claimed to be, as all foreigners do. Tall, well built, with a pleasant and agreeable face, much intelligence, of remarkable politeness, with haughtiness without insolence. There was in his home more order and cleanliness than luxury. His wife, or rather she who was supposed to be, for it has since been learned that they were not married, was an Englishwoman of quality, of a haughty character, and which the meannesses of our little and grand dames soon rendered impertinent. After having travelled over Germany and

Italy, he settled in Venice, where he died. His system has been and must have been pernicious to France. Law did not know the character of the nation nor that of the prince with whom he had dealings. The overthrow of fortunes has not been the most unfortunate effect of the system and of the regency: a wise administration might have re-established affairs; but morals once depraved are only restored by the revolution of a State, and I have seen them change visibly. During the preceding century, the nobility and the military were only animated by honour; the magistrate sought consideration; the man of letters, the man of talent was ambitious of reputation; the tradesman gloried in his fortune, because it was a proof of intelligence, vigilance, work and thrift; the ecclesiastics who were not virtuous were at least compelled to appear so. All the classes of the State have to-day but one object: to be rich, without any one fixing the limit of the fortune to which they aspire.

An event which interested all Europe wrought consternation in Paris and in a few days throughout all France was the illness of the King. On

the 13th of July, he was attacked by a violent fever, with the most sinister symptoms; the head was beginning to become affected and the frightened physicians were losing their own. Helvétius, the youngest of all, whom we have since seen first physician to the Queen, and whom she did not disdain to consider as her friend, retained all his presence of mind. He proposed the bleeding of the foot; all those consulted rejected his proposition. Maréchal, first surgeon, whose opinion was much thought of, was the most opposed to that of Helvétius, saying that if there were but one lancet in France, he would break it so as not to perform this bleeding.

The Regent, M. le duc, M. de Villeroi, the Duchesse de Ventendour, the Duchesse de la Ferté, her sister and godmother to the King, and a few intimate officers were present at the consultation, and much grieved not to see unanimity. Some of the city physicians were called in, such as Dumoulin, Silva, Camille, Falconet. They were the first to side with Helvétius, who upheld his opinion and justified it with courage, saying: "If the King is not bled, he is dead; this is the

sole and even urgent remedy; I know that in such a case I can not demonstrate the certainty of success; I know to what I expose myself, if it does not have the desired effect; but here I must, according to my judgment, consult only my conscience and the preservation of the King."

At last, the bleeding took place. An hour after, the fever diminished, the danger vanished and, on the fifth day, the King was able to rise and receive the compliments of the assemblies and of the foreign ministers.

Helvétius was given all the credit by the Court, and the public, and proved that on many occasions probity and honour are not the least qualities of a physician.

It would be difficult to describe the transports of joy which the King's convalescence caused throughout France, and which followed the general consternation. What we have seen in 1744, when the King was in such great danger at Metz, only gave a feeble idea of what had occurred on a similar occasion in 1721. A witness of both events, I have seen in 1744 all that the love of Frenchmen can inspire; but in 1721, hearts, while

filled with the tenderest love, were besides animated by a contrary and very powerful passion, by a general hatred against the Regent, whom people feared to have as master. All the churches, wherein for five days nothing but cries of grief had been heard, rang with *Te Deums*; no prayer was addressed to heaven which was not as much against the Regent as for the King.

The ordinance for the public fêtes was only a permission to begin them, a simple attention of the police to maintain order. There was not in it that threat of a fine, so ridiculous, so offensive and so absurdly contradictory in an ordinance relating to public rejoicing.

Cardinal Dubois had just ended a negotiation which interested the Regent infinitely: the marriage of the King with the Infanta of Spain, and that of Mlle. de Montpensier, daughter of the Regent, with the Prince des Asturies. Philip V had been overcome with joy at having the King of France for a son-in-law and the second marriage being the necessary condition of the first, he had sacrificed the resentment he might have had against the Regent. There remained, not a po-

litical difficulty, but a domestic embarrassment: namely, to inform the King, whose consent formally given was necessary. This prince, still a child, and of a timid nature, might not receive the proposition as it was desired that it should be. Marshal de Villeroi, an almost avowed enemy of the Regent, might perhaps influence the King unfavourably, might incline the cabal to circulate the rumour that the Regent was making a disproportionate marriage, as to age, so as to defer, as much as he could, the hope of seeing the direct succession assured, and counted on events; the Infanta was hardly more than three then and the King was in his twelfth year.

The Regent, to strengthen his case with the King, confided the affair to M. le duc, who, being superintendent of the King's education, was not to learn this news at the same time as the public. He received the confidence very pleasantly and much approved of the alliance. The Regent then spoke of it to the Bishop of Fréjus, telling him that it was a distinction granted him over the marshal towards whom he enjoined him to the greatest secrecy. Fleury first made objection to the

Infanta's age, replied rather coldly to the advances which the Regent made to have him side with him, said however that he did not believe that the King would resist, and promised to be with the King when the announcement would be made. It is very doubtful whether he remained faithful to the secret, and did not impart his knowledge to the marshal, whom he treated with great caution, who had rendered him services, who was of use to him and towards whom it was not yet time to be ungrateful.

However that may be, he seemed to wish to avoid being present at the announcement. It was to be made immediately before the meeting of the regency council, to which the King was to go at once to confirm the consent, the *yes* uttered in his closet, so that the affair might be consummated.

The Regent, before entering the King's apartment, made inquiry about those who were there and, hearing that the Bishop of Fréjus had not come, he sent word to him and only entered after having seen him come with the eager air of a man who has made a mistake in the hour. With the

King, in his apartment, there were only the Regent, M. le duc, Marshal de Villeroi, the Bishop of Fréjus and Cardinal Dubois.

The Regent, affecting a playful air and a tone of respectful freedom, told the King of the affair in question, set off the advantages of the alliance and begged him to express his satisfaction. The King, surprised, was silent, appeared to be heavy hearted, and his eyes became moist. The Bishop of Fréjus, seeing that he must make up his mind, either please the Regent or lose his friendship, seconded what had been said. The marshal decided by the example of the bishop: "Come, my master," said he to the King, "you must do the thing gracefully." The Regent much embarrassed, M. le duc very taciturn, and Dubois, with a stiff air, waited for the King to break the silence which lasted seven or eight minutes, during which the bishop did not cease speaking in low tones to the King, and exhorted him with tenderness to come to the council meeting and declare his consent. The silence continuing and the meeting of the whole council before which the King would soon be, promising to increase his



timidity, the bishop turned towards the Regent and said to him: "His Majesty will go to the council, but he requires a little time to prepare himself." Thereupon the Regent replied that he was made to await the King's pleasure, bowed to him with a loving and respectful air, went out, making a sign to the others to follow. M. le duc, the marshal and the bishop remained with the King. Dubois, who, since he was cardinal, no longer attended the council meetings, where he was refused precedence, withdrew into another room.

The Regent, having entered the council chamber, found all those present much perplexed at the secret conference in the King's apartment. Those assembled had been looking at one another for a quarter of an hour when the King appeared, followed by the three who had remained with him.

As soon as all were in their seats, every eye was turned on the King, whose own were still red. The Regent, addressing him, asked if he thought it proper that the council be informed of his marriage. The King replied by a *yes* rather short

and low, but which was nevertheless heard, and was sufficient to the Regent, who launched forth into the details of the advantages of the alliance. When all appeared favourably disposed, he asked for opinions which could not help but be unanimous, and every member delivered his with a few words of approbation. Marshal de Villeroi, while approving as the others, added sadly that it was unfortunate that the Infanta should be so young. The remark, just in itself, was very much out of place; he should have followed the advice which he had first given to the King, to do the thing gracefully, since it had been decided; and the remark could only increase the King's sombre humour. The Regent did not give him time to reflect, complimented him, laid stress on the unanimity of the council's opinion, a guarantee of that of all Frenchmen, and at once, to change the subject, had an affair reported.

That same day all the messengers were dispatched. The King was very serious the remainder of the day; on the morrow, the compliments he received diverted him and soon he conversed with the others about the fêtes being pre-

pared for the arrival of the Infanta. The Regent had the sense not to speak of the two marriages at the same time; jealousy of the second would have turned many people against the first; but two weeks after, when minds had been made familiar with the first news, the Regent sought out the King, and in the presence of M. le duc, the bishop, Marshal de Villeroy and Cardinal Dubois, after having informed the first two of the matter, gave an account of the honour which the King of Spain wished to do him, and asked the King permission to accept. The King gave it to him with the cheerfulness of a child who for the past fortnight, has only heard of marriage and of Spain. This alliance with Spain was a stunning blow to the old Court. Marshals de Villeroy, de Villars, d'Huxelles, de Tallard, presented their compliments as the others, and strove to hide their displeasure, without being able to conceal their efforts.

Those who only swore by Spain as long as they had flattered themselves to make a bugbear of it against the Regent, no longer knew on what to lean, could not get over their surprise to see des-

tined to the throne of Spain the daughter of a prince whose head Philip V had asked during the last reign and who, since, had waged war with Spain. The choice of a child which would delay the marriage of the King several years appeared to them a master stroke of politics. There is every appearance, however, that the Regent would have been but little interested in the choice of the Infanta if he could without that have married his daughter to the Prince des Asturies.

The Duc de Saint-Simon was appointed ambassador extraordinary to go and ask the hand of the Infanta. Prince de Rohan, grandfather of the Marshal de Soubise of to-day and son-in-law of the Duchesse de Ventendour, was named to make the exchange of the princesses on the frontier. The Duc d'Ossone came to Paris, as ambassador extraordinary, to ask for the hand of Mlle. de Montpensier.

We then had, as ordinary ambassador at Madrid, the Marquis de Manlevrier-Langeron: Lauftez, an Irishman by birth and major in the gardes du corps of the King of Spain, held in Paris the same place for Spain. Whatever union

the double marriage made between the two branches of the house of France, the conduct of our ministers at Madrid required prudence. There was, in truth, between France, Spain and England, a defensive alliance, based on the treaties of Utrecht and the Triple-Alliance. In it had been stipulated a reciprocal guarantee of the States possessed by these three powers, which confirmed, at least tacitly, the renunciations and the succession of the crown of England to the Protestant house of Hanover. These clauses suited the Regent very well, but were not at all to the taste of the King nor to that of the Queen of Spain, who retained the hope of returning to France, should it have the misfortune to lose its King. Besides, France and England had promised its good services to end the differences which remained to be settled between the Emperor and Spain. But, there was at that time a new germ of misunderstanding.

The Emperor, still retaining Austrian ideas, had just made a promotion of Grandees of Spain. Philip V complained of this to the allied powers. England, out of gratitude for the advantages she

had secured from Spain, arranged this affair and urged the Emperor to make a statement by which he made it known that he had not meant to create *Grandeės* of Spain, which title was not to be found among those of the lords to whom he had simply bestowed distinctions and honours which any sovereign has the right to do in his Court. The news of this arrangement reached Madrid two days after the signing of the contract, and quieted Philip V very much.

The custom in Spain is for the King not to sign the marriage contract himself, but to have it signed by deputies. This had been done with the marriage contracts of our last two queens, although at the signing of that of Marie-Thérèse, Louis XIV and Philip V were personally at the frontier. The Duc de Saint-Simon desired the King's signature; Grimaldo claimed the ancient custom, but the King and Queen of Spain consented to sign, to show their pleasure at the alliance. During the entire course of this affair, Philip V showed himself more French than he had ever done. It was not the measured joy of a King who succeeds in a negotiation: it was that

of a happy father, of a generous man who becomes reconciled. Having heard that the city of Paris had complimented the Duc d'Ossone, he had the city of Madrid pay a compliment to the ambassador of France, an honor which had never before been done to an ambassador.

Speaking of things without a precedent, one occurred for the Duc d'Ossone, one which has since served as an example on similar occasions: the Regent, wishing to give him the order of the Holy-Ghost, thought that the King, not yet being a chevalier, and who was not to receive the order before the morrow of his coronation, could create chevaliers only when one himself. He simply wore the cordon such as is given to all the children of France at the time of their birth. The Duc d'Ossone was therefore granted permission to wear the cordon while waiting for the time when he could be knighted.

More was done in Spain for the Duc de Saint-Simon than was done in France for the Duc d'Ossone. Philip V made him and one of his sons, whom the father selected, grandees, the honour to be enjoyed by them at the same time. He selected

his second son. The Golden Fleece was given to the elder.

All that remained of the Austrian seemed smothered in the hearts of the Spaniards, who had been able to keep it; and the Frenchmen by birth who still happened to be, through their positions, attached to the person of the King, gave vent to transports of delight. Such was Bontin de Valouse, first equerry to Philip V and chevalier of the Fleece. Such was also la Roche, first valet of the wardrobe, a man of recognised honesty, so much so that Philip V trusted him with the *estampille*, which is a seal whereon the King's signature is reproduced most faithfully. It is used in Spain to save the King the trouble of signing himself, an invention both convenient and dangerous, an Asiatic laziness which may some day pass on to the ministers. The keeping of the *estampille* is not a dignity, but a charge of confidence not less honourable on that account, and La Roche was by virtue of this secretary of the cabinet. Among the worthy French established in Madrid, I must not forget Sartine, whose son in Paris promises to become a person of promi-



nence. Sartine, born in Lyons, had done some banking there; certain circumstances had caused him to establish himself in Spain. He was a man of intelligence and probity, active, a hard worker and fertile in resources. He had been in charge of the supply department of the armies in Spain; often consulted by the ministers, the generals and the King himself, he had many friends and deserved them. He was commissary general of the navy when he was dragged down by the downfall of Tinnaguas, secretary of state, his friend, at the beginning of the Alberoni ministry. This minister, violent and despotic, who imputed to him as a crime his intimacy with the Duc de Saint-Aignan, our ambassador at Madrid, and the latter being compelled to leave Spain hurriedly, Sartine was cast into prison, and only came out on the downfall of Alberoni. He since married a *camériste*, who later was a lady of honour to the Queen of Spain, and became commissary of Barcelona, where he died. His real name was des Sardines. His father was a grocer at Lyons. While in Spain Sartine wore the cross of Saint-Michael. I do not think, however, that he was ever made a

chevalier of that order; I do not find his name in any list. I wish that his son may give me an opportunity to so speak of him as I do of his father; it depends on him: my duty is to render justice.

One of the principal clauses of the instructions given to the Duc de Saint-Simon was to see and to cultivate the acquaintance of the Jesuit d'Aubenton, the King's confessor, a very important place when it is not a hollow title. From the very first visit, the good father broke out into protestations of his attachment to the Regent and to France, and of the tenderest esteem for the Duc de Saint-Simon, whose friendship for the Jesuits, he said, he well knew. From this subject he passed on to the wish of the King of Spain to place the Infanta in the hands of one of their fathers, alone able to early inspire in that princess the true principles of religion.

D'Aubenton spoke the truth as to the wish of Philip V; for at the first private audience which that prince gave to the ambassador, he interrupted a discussion of affairs to request him to ask the Regent that the Infanta be instructed by a Jesuit, and repeated it at different times.

The Duc de Saint-Simon, already informed of the wish of Philip V, could only answer favourably to d'Aubenton's proposition. The zealous father, delighted with the opening, became radiant, caressing and after several wheedling circumvolutions, and disconnected and vague phrases: "This is not all," said he, "the King expects still more from Your Excellency, from your attachment for him, from your love of religion, from your friendship for our association." It was certainly not for the last subject of eulogy that Saint-Simon was best known; but one of the figures of rhetoric of monks is to inspire zeal for themselves, by supposing that one already possesses it. "The King," continued d'Aubenton, "is dying to request you to ask the King to take a Jesuit as confessor and to urge the Regent to second you. The infirmities of Abbé Fleury threaten him with an early death; it would therefore be proper to get the start, and that, in the same dispatch wherein you ask for a Jesuit for the Infanta, you propose to have one appointed to the King."

D'Aubenton terminated his speech by a thousand offers of services for the grandeeship which

the ambassador desired, and finally asked him to give him his opinion of the matter in a friendly way.

The trap was rather well laid and the bait cleverly presented. Saint-Simon extricated himself, however. He expressed to the Jesuit much esteem for his association, and agreed that nothing would be better than to appoint a Jesuit to the Infanta, since the King, her father, desired it; but as regards the King's confessional and the interior of his household, the proposition might possibly not be better received in France than might be in Spain that of changing the confessor of Philip V or his ministers; that it was quite a step to have a Jesuit accepted for the Infanta; that the consideration in which the association was held would do the rest, and that they would be the more easily successful as they would appear to demand less. •

Let us return to what took place in Spain with regard to the double marriage before turning to the affairs of France.

The Queen, Italian by birth and in heart, hated the Spaniards as much as they hated her, and the daily evidence of this kept up the reciprocal hatred.

The Queen did not hesitate to confess it, and the people, on their side, when the King and the Queen passed, cried freely in the streets and from the shops: "*Viva el rey y la Savoyana!*" (the late Queen, adored of the Spaniards, and whose memory is still venerated). The reigning Queen in vain pretended to despise these cries of the people; she was in despair over them; unfortunately, the people and she were not of equal strength. She had all-power through a quite natural means. The King's temperament made a woman a necessity to him, and his devotion did not permit of any infidelity. The Queen was homely, although she looked rather noble, and the King was always in a disposition which made him think her beautiful and treat her as such. She made use of all possible coquetry towards her husband, praised him publicly and in his presence on his beauty; and although he had been handsome when young, he was then in such a state of decay as to his face, that, if princes were not invulnerable against the most disgusting flattery, he could have taken that of the Queen as a derision.

The King and the Queen being equally jealous

of what might be said to the one or the other, never left one another day or night. Every day, when they awoke, the *assafeta* came to give them *manteaux de lit*, and they said their prayers; after which, Grimaldo, to whom the other state's secretaries turned over the affairs of their departments, entered and made his report. Grimaldo being dismissed, the King took his dressing-gown, stepped into a side room to dress, and the Queen into the room where she had her dressing-table. The King, soon dressed, had his confessor enter, and after a quarter of an hour of confession or private conversation, went to join the Queen: the children came to them. A few chief officers, the ladies and the *caméristes* on duty composed the entire company, the conversation turned on hunting, devotion or other things of similar importance. The toilette lasted about three-quarters of an hour. The King and the Queen then passed into a room wherein were given private audiences to the foreign ministers and lords of the Court who had asked for them.

When some one was ushered in, the Queen pretended to withdraw into the recess of a window;

but the one who had to speak to the King knew that that prince would repeat all to the Queen, that she would be offended at the attempted secrecy, and would unfavourably influence the King, so that he did not fail to beg her to approach or spoke loud enough to be heard by her, if she persisted in her false discretion.

The Queen therefore knew exactly what was said to the King, and had besides, each week, an hour in which she could, without the King's knowledge, converse with those whom she wished to have secretly introduced: that day was the one on which the King gave a private audience.

The King, with his hat on his head, seated in front of a table, the *grandeess* standing, side by side against the wall and also with their hats on, each individual who had given his name was called in the order it was written. He knelt before the King, explained his business in a very few words, usually left a memorandum on the table, arose, and withdrew after having kissed the King's hand. The priests were distinguished from the worldly, to the extent of being ordered to rise when they

had made a genuflection. If any one of those who came to this audience wished not to be heard by any one and if he were known, he said so. Then the officer who held the list turned towards the grantees, saying aloud: "This is a secret audience;" all went out and returned only after that individual had withdrawn. The only captain of the guards, outside, held the door partly open so that, although unable to hear anything, he could with his head in the room, always see the King and the one who spoke to him.

If the Queen took advantage of this audience to talk to someone, it had to be done very secretly; for the King was always anxious as to what might be said privately to her, so anxious that when she was confessing, if the confession lasted longer than usual, he entered the room and called her.

They took communion together every week, and the Queen's ladies would have displeased him had they not done the same.

The King's sole amusement was the hunt, which was not less sad than the rest of his life. Peasants formed an enclosure for a battue, and made



stags, boars, deer, foxes, etc., pass before the King and Queen, who, hidden in a bower, fired on the animals.

What is known of the life of Mme. de Maintenon and what is seen here of the Queen of Spain's conduct is sufficient evidence of the torture of the women who wish to govern the most subjugated kings. If one uncovers the private life of favourites, one will have pity of a position so coveted.

Whatever influence the Queen may have had over the King's mind, she was compelled to study him at all moments, to create or make use of opportunities, to give in on occasions and to employ the advantages given her by the King's temperament. The Queen's refusal irritated her husband, excited him more and more, sometimes produced violent scenes and ended by having the Queen obtain what she wanted. The violence of the King's desires made the Queen's strength.

Philip V, born with a sense of justice, but not very broad, was silent, reserved, even timid, distrustful of himself. His education acquired in France, his mode of life in Spain had only con-

firmed his character. Taciturn and through that itself a more careful observer of those who approached him, he noticed their ridiculous sides, and sometimes, in the privacy of his solitude, gave amusing accounts of them.

He was very watchful over his health: his physician, had he been an intriguer, could have played a great part. Lyghins, an Irishman, who occupied that first place, far removed from intrigue and cupidity, learned in his art, devoted himself to it solely. After his death, the Queen had the position given to Servi, her private physician.

Philip V had loved war, although he had waged it in a singular manner. He never made a plan of campaign, relying on his general officers for his military operations; he only contributed to them by his presence. If they placed him out of danger, he remained there, and did not consider it a part of his glory to approach it. If the chances of the day placed him in the midst of the sharpest fire, he remained there with the same calmness, and enjoyed looking at those who showed fear.

Easy to serve, good, familiar with his private servants, wholly French at heart, he only wel-

comed the Spaniards out of gratitude for their services. Tenderly loving the King, his nephew, he retained a hope of returning if we had the misfortune of losing this sole scion of the royal family. Yet he would not have ascended without scruples the throne of his forefathers, after the solemn renunciations which he had made to the crown of France. He could not, on the same principle, consider as illusory the renunciation of Marie-Thérèse of Austria, to the throne of Spain, on marrying Louis XIV. His conscience would have been at rest on neither of the thrones. These scruples, which his confessor had difficulty in dissipating, are not those of a strong-minded man, nor, we may say, worthy of a prince, but they belong to a pure soul. His remorse, more curbed than destroyed, has been the principal cause of his abdication, and of the reluctance he had in again taking the crown after the death of his son Louis I. The throne transmitted to his son can not, according to his scruples, have appeared less of an usurpation, if such there was; but after all it sufficed that he made the sole sacrifice depending on him. Besides, scrupulous souls are very con-

sistent neither in that which disturbs them, nor in that which calms them.

The Queen was of quite opposite character; to reign was all to her. The least legitimate possession would have been a right in her eyes. Raised in her father's little Court, she had not there acquired a very exact idea of the Courts of Europe. Yet she thought herself made to reign, well or ill, from the day she ascended the throne. We have seen how fortune placed her there.

She first proposed two objects to herself and never lost sight of them. The first, to establish her influence so firmly over the mind of the King that she might rule under that prince's name. The second, to provide against the state of widow of a King of Spain who would have as a successor a son of whom she was not the mother.

She therefore resolved to procure a sovereignty for one of her sons, where she might some day retire, again reign, or at least not obey.

The Court of Spain was and continued to be divided into two cabals; the Italian, the least numerous, was the dominant one through the Queen's favour. The Spanish cabal, for which were all the

prayers of the nation, moaned at the credit of the Italians and hated them cordially. Almost all important places were, in truth, occupied by Spaniards, but they were limited to the titles of these places of which but few performed the duties owing to the solitude in which the Queen constantly kept the King. The surgeon, the apothecary and the personal valets were French.

The two princesses whose contracts had just been signed, arrived on the same day in the island of Pheasants of the river of Bidassoa, where the exchange was made, and where had taken place in 1659 the interview of Louis XIV, the Queen, his mother, and of Philip IV, brother to the Queen.

There were at first a few difficulties over the act of exchange between Prince de Rohan and the Marquis de Santa Cruz. The former had called himself Highness in the French act. Santa-Cruz, majordomo major to the Queen of Spain, charged with accompanying the Infanta, declared that he would pass over everything they might wish in the French act, because Spain did not have to settle the titles and ranks of the French, but that in the Span-

ish act, the only title given to both would be *excellency*. Prince de Rohan, seeing that in that act, Santa-Cruz did not take the title of *grandee*, did not take that of *duke and peer*, and contented himself with signing the exchange, without any addition of rank. .

The exchange being made, the Infanta took the road to Paris, and Mlle. de Montpensier that of Madrid. The two princesses were followed by no one of their nation, with the exception of a sub-governess (de Nièves, *segнора de honor*) who was left to the Infanta, because of her youth.

I shall not linger over the celebrations which fill the journals; but I shall continue to call attention to special matters worthy of notice.

The Spanish gravity and reserve do not permit of seeing a married couple going to bed. However, our ambassador, wishing to establish the wedding of the Prince des Asturies, for the couple were not to live together before a year, because of the prince's delicate health, obtained from Their Catholic Majesties a derogation to the etiquette of Spain, and in order to persuade them cited what

had taken place at the marriage of the Duc de Bourgogne. A French example was very powerful on the mind of Philip V. The precaution was then taken to gain over a few sober persons whose approbation prevented the others from being shocked. At last the couple were put to bed and the curtains open, members of the Court were allowed to enter the room. A quarter of an hour after, the curtains were drawn together. The Duc de Popoli, tutor to the prince, remained under the curtain on one side, and the Duchesse de Montteillano, governess to the princess, on the other. After a few minutes, all those present were dismissed and the couple separated.

The Princess des Asturies, from the first days of her arrival at the Court of Spain, exhibited evidences of a sombre and sullen humour. She had almost to be forced to call upon the King and Queen. The most elaborate preparations had been made for a ball which Their Catholic Majesties and the entire Court looked forward to with delight. The princess refused to appear there, without reason, but solely through the whim of a dull and foolish child; either she did not reply to the

remonstrances made to her, or her reply was that the King and Queen could live according to their fancy, and that she wished to live according to her own. The details of scenes sadly ridiculous would be disgusting, even in the simple memoirs such as these I write: To complete in a few words that which concerns her, she continued to be at Madrid as foolish, as dull, as sullen as we have since seen her in Paris, where she came to vegetate, dowager Queen of Spain, from 1725 to 1742, when she died in the Luxembourg.

The Infanta arrived in Paris and there received the honours of a Queen; she was even given that title in all the accounts. Events have shown that people had been too hasty in calling her Queen. There was no risk, and it would have been more proper to wait, since, independently of her destination, she took, by her birth alone, precedence of Madame. It is true that in anticipation the title of Dauphine had been bestowed on the Duchesse de Bourgogne, as soon as she arrived in France; but that was necessary to give her precedence which no princess of the blood would have given her, in view of her then being only the daughter of a



Duke of Savoy, who, not yet being a King, gave way to the electors.

As soon as our ambassador had fulfilled his mission in Spain, he hastened the more to leave that country, as Cardinal Dubois had a mind to keep him there on various pretexts.

On the 16th of February, the King, having entered into his fourteenth year, received the compliments of the Court on having reached his majority, and on the 22nd he came on that account to the Parliament to hold his bed of justice, and created three dukes and peers at that session: Biron, Lévis and La Vallière. The family of the first ingenuously urged in their application the loss of the duchy, through the condemnation of Charles de Biron, for the crime of *lèse-majesté*. Others wished to use this as a motive of exclusion: yet too much should not be made of personal faults. It is just and the part of a wise government that a family ruined by its faults should be allowed to rise again by its services.

The regency council ceased to exist on the majority and the councils resumed the form they had under the late King, with the exception of the two

princes of the blood, the Duc de Chartres and M. le duc, who entered the Council of State, with the Duc d'Orléans. Cardinal Dubois was a member by right and he introduced into it the Comte de Morville, by giving him the department of Foreign Affairs. .

Cardinal Dubois, in spite of his power, feared all those who approached the King. To restrict as much as possible the court of intimates, he had the grand and first receptions which were granted by Louis XIV suppressed and in their stead he created others called familiar, which he limited to himself, to the princes of the blood and to the Comte de Toulouse, to the Duchesse de Ventadour and to the Duc de Charost, and extended them to the Duc du Maine and to his two sons when they were restored to the honours of princes of the blood. At first he did not grant them to the Bishop of Fréjus; but seeing soon that it would be imprudent to refuse them to a man cherished of the King, and who would finally obtain them from that prince himself, a few days after he placed his name on the list, as if it had been omitted through oversight.

The suspicions of the cardinal increased from day to day. He noticed that the King had no liking for him. Independently of an ugliness of face, of a natural stammer which a habit of deceit and of primitive servitude had increased still more, his manners were never more awkward nor more disagreeable than when he strove to please. He lacked the exterior polish of education which can no longer be acquired after a certain age; so that being unable to attain politeness when he needed it, he seemed low and fawning; and his habitual coarseness to the eyes of a young prince accustomed to the respect and charm of the Regent, had an air of insolence.

The cardinal, to overcome as much as he could the King's disgust, often presented him with novelties suitable to his age. Destouches, our minister at London, was intrusted with these commissions, and the cardinal requested that they only be sent one after another, so as to multiply the occasions to please the King and keep up his gratitude.

As the King was reviewing his own troops, the cardinal wished to enjoy the honours of premier



CARDINAL DU BOIS



minister, which are almost the same as those rendered to the person of the King. He mounted a horse a quarter of an hour before the arrival of the King and passed in front of the troops, who saluted him, sword in hand. I saw, a few years after, the King's Household do the same for Cardinal de Fleury, who had not taken the title of premier minister, but who enjoyed full-power. A thing which proves that these honours were not compulsory is that the Duc d'Harcourt, captain of a company of gardes du corps, displeased at Cardinal de Fleury, saw him pass without making him the slightest salute, and the regiment remained as still as the captain.

Cardinal Dubois paid dearly for this little satisfaction. The movements of the horse caused an abscess to burst which led the physicians to believe that gangrene would soon set in in the bladder. They declared to him that unless he were operated on promptly he had not four days to live. He became violently angry at this. The Duc d'Orléans, notified of the patient's condition, had much trouble to quiet him and to persuade him to allow himself to be taken to Versailles, where another

scene took place. When the Faculty suggested that he receive the sacraments before the operation, his fury knew no bounds and he angrily addressed everyone who approached him. At last, giving way to exhaustion after so much frenzy, he sent for a Franciscan friar, with whom he remained alone about ten minutes. Then mention was made of bringing him the Viaticum. "The Viaticum!" he exclaimed, "that is easily said; there is a great ceremony for cardinals; let someone be sent to Paris to find out from Bissy." The surgeons, seeing the danger of the least delay, told him that in the meantime the operation might be performed. At each proposal, he gave way to new attacks of fury. The Duc d'Orléans decided him by dint of entreaties and the operation was performed by La Peyronie, but the nature of the sore and of the pus showed that the patient would not last. As long as he was in possession of his senses, he did not cease with grindings of the teeth to inveigh against the Faculty. The convulsions of death combined with those of despair and when he was no longer able to see, to hear or to blaspheme, extreme-unction was administered to him

and took the place of the Viaticum. He died on the morrow of the operation.

Thus ended that phenomenon of fortune, loaded with honours and riches. He possessed, besides the archbishopric of Cambrai, seven important abbeys, and when he died he was trying to secure those of Citeaux, of Prémontré and others. I see in a letter dated May 19, 1722, and written by the cardinal to Chavigny, one of his agents at Madrid, that not content with the premiership, he wished to have revived for himself the ancient sovereignty of Cambrai. He requests Chavigny to look up the titles in Spain. "If the King of Spain," he says in his letter, "has been an usurper as he appears to have been by the protests which the archbishops have always made, the King of France is the wrongful holder." Chavigny was unsuccessful in his search.

The office of premier minister was worth one hundred and fifty thousand livres to the cardinal and the superintendency of the mails one hundred thousand livres. But, what is shameful for a minister and would be for any Frenchman, he received from England a pension of forty thousand pounds



sterling, worth about one million, evident proof of the sacrifice he made of France to the English. He made them one very unworthy of his office. King George had imposed an extraordinary tax of one hundred thousand pounds sterling on the Catholics of England. At the first news of this, our entire council took sides with them and instructed Cardinal Dubois to complain vigorously against it and to ask for the repeal of the tax. Nothing but the dignity of the cardinal should have kept him from tergiversating. He wrote a very strong letter, read it to the council, who approved of it and had it sent. George's ministers were at first so embarrassed that they did not know what to do; they were about to repeal the tax, but they were soon reassured. The cardinal, after the departure of the first messenger, had promptly dispatched one to Destouches, our agent in London, with a letter in cipher dated November 19, 1722, in which he instructed him to calm the English ministers and assured them that we would not follow up that matter.

Besides this he enjoyed the income of two mil-

lions, without counting cash and an immense quantity of furniture, carriages, silver and jewelry of all kinds. More greedy than avaricious, he kept a superb house and a sumptuous table of which he did the honours very well, although personally sober.

The immense collection of furniture of the cardinal went to his elder brother, Dubois, secretary of the cabinet, since the younger had become secretary of state.

Cardinal Dubois no doubt possessed great intelligence, but he was much inferior to his office. More fit for intrigue than for administration, he actively followed an object without grasping all the bearings. The affair which interested him at one time rendered him incapable of attention for any other. He had neither the extensiveness nor that flexibility of mind necessary to a minister intrusted with different operations, and which must frequently come together. Wishing that nothing should escape him, and being unable to suffice to all, he has been seen at times throwing a pile of sealed letters into the fire, "to post himself."

he said. What injured his administration most was the suspicions which he inspired, the opinion people had of his person.

He despised virtue as openly as he disdained hypocrisy, although he was full of deceitfulness. He had more vices than faults; though quite exempt of meanness, he was not so of folly. He never blushed at his birth, and did not select the ecclesiastic habit as a veil which covers all origin, but as the foremost means of rising for an ambition without extraction. If he caused all honours of etiquette to be rendered him, childish vanity had nothing to do with it; it was the conviction that honours due to offices and dignities equally belong, without distinction of birth, to all those who take possession of them, and that it is as much a duty as a right to demand them.

- In having rendered to him what was his due, he was not the more dignified. No haughtiness was experienced from him but much vulgar harshness. The least contradiction angered him, and in his fury, he has been seen to rush against the chairs and tables of his apartment.

On the day of Easter which followed his pro-

motion to the cardinalship, having awakened a little later than usual, he broke out into curses against all his servants, because they had allowed him to oversleep on a day when they knew that he wished to say mass. They hurried to dress him, he swearing the while. He recalled some affair, sent for his secretary, forgot to go and say mass, even to hear it.

He generally ate a chicken wing every evening. One day, about the time he was to be served, a dog carried away the chicken. His servants saw nothing better to do than to put another one on the spit immediately. The cardinal asks for his chicken on the instant; the maître d'hôtel, foreseeing his fury if he were told of the fact, or asked to wait later than the usual hour, makes up his mind and says coldly: "Monseigneur, you have had your supper."

"I have had my supper?" replied the cardinal.

"Of course, Monseigneur. It is true that you ate but little, you seemed to be much wrapped in thought; but if you wish, another chicken will be served you; it will not take long."

Dr. Chirac, who saw him every evening, comes

in at that moment. The valets inform him as to the situation and beg him to assist them.

"*Parbleu*," says the cardinal; "here is something strange! My men wish to persuade me that I have had my supper; I have not the slightest recollection of it and, moreover, I feel very hungry."

"So much the better," replies Chirac; "work has made you very tired, the first pieces of meat must have only aroused your appetite, and you may eat a little more without danger. Have Monseigneur served," added he to the servants. "I shall watch him finish his supper." The chicken was brought. The cardinal looked upon his eating twice as an evident sign of health, and was, during the meal, in the best possible humour.

He did not constrain himself for anyone. The Princess Montauban-Bautru having displeased him, which was no hard matter, he sent her about her business in energetic terms. She went to complain to the Regent from whom she received only the reply that the cardinal was a bit quick, but otherwise of good advice. Dubois did not act differently with Cardinal de Gesvres, a grave man and of severe morals. The reparations of the

Regent, being of the same kind as the minister's offences, people became accustomed to look upon his words as without importance.

It was not necessary to displease him in order to experience outbursts from him. The Marquise de Conflans, the governess to the Regent, having gone to the cardinal's solely to pay him a visit, found him in a moment of ill humour. She was unknown to him and hardly had she said: "Monseigneur . . ."

"Ho! Monseigneur," said the cardinal, cutting her short, "it can not be done."

"But, Monseigneur . . ."

"But, but, there is no but, when I tell you that it can not be done."

The marquise uselessly attempted to explain that she sought no favours. The cardinal, without listening, took her by the shoulders, turned her around and made her go out. The marquise, frightened, thought him suffering from an attack of insanity, was not much mistaken and fled crying that he should be locked up.

Sometimes he could be calmed if the same tone were applied to him. He had among his private

secretaries an unfrocked benedictine, named Venier, a man of unscrupulous character. The cardinal, while having him work with him, had need of a paper which he did not find at hand at a given time; he becomes excited, swears, exclaims that with thirty clerks he cannot be waited on, that he is going to hire one hundred and will be no better off. Venier looks at him calmly, without answering, lets him give vent to his complaint. The phlegm and the silence of the secretary increase the fury of the cardinal who, taking him by the arm, shakes him and shouts: "Why do you not answer me, scoundrel; is it not true?"

"Monseigneur," says Venier, not at all moved, "take but one more clerk to swear for you, you will have time to spare and all will be well."

The cardinal became calm and finally laughed. The Regent was delighted at his minister's death. On the day of the operation the extremely warm atmosphere turned to storm; at the first thunder crash, the prince could not help saying: "I hope that this weather will cause my rogue to depart." In fact, he had no more consideration for his former master than for any one else:

the Regent hardly dared to make him the slightest recommendation. The prince had kept for himself the benefice and favour sheet in return for his work with the King; but he had allowed himself to be required to first communicate the list to the cardinal who insolently crossed out the names of those he did not like. Never was servitude more shameful than that wherein this prince had placed himself, which he felt painfully, which he was ashamed to acknowledge, and from which he had not the strength to free himself.

As soon as the cardinal had expired, the Regent came from Versailles to Meudon to announce it to the King, who, already prepared by the Bishop of Fréjus, requested the prince to take charge of the government, and the next day appointed him premier minister.

As the King had only been transferred to Meudon for the convenience of the cardinal, he returned to Versailles two days after.

At first the Duc d' Orleans appeared to wish to give himself up to work; but his laziness and dissipation soon caused him to abandon affairs to the secretaries of state and he continued to give



himself up to low debauchery. His health was visibly affected by this, and throughout the greater part of the morning he was in a state of torpor which rendered him incapable of application. It was foreseen that at any moment, he would be carried away by an attack of apoplexy. His faithful servants strove to have him diet himself, or at least to give up the excesses which might kill him at any time. He replied that a foolish fear should not deprive him of his pleasures; yet *blasé* in all things, he gave himself up to them more from habit than taste. He added that, far from fearing a sudden death, that was the sort he would choose.

For some time past, Chirac, noticing the full-blooded complexion of the prince and his bloodshot eyes, wanted to bleed him. On the morning of Thursday, December 2nd, he urged him so earnestly that the prince to rid himself of the physician's persecution, said that he had urgent affairs which could not be put off, but that, on the following Monday, he would surrender fully to the Faculty, and until then would be most careful in his diet. He gave this

promise so little thought that that very day he dined at noon, a thing he never did, and ate much as was his habit.

In the afternoon, alone with the Duchesse de Phalaris, one of his fawners, he was amusing himself while waiting for the working hour with the King. Seated one next to the other, before the fire, the Duc d'Orléans suddenly falls on the arm of the duchesse who, seeing him unconscious, rises in fright and calls for help, without finding anyone in the apartment. The prince's servants, who knew that he always went to the King's room by a hidden staircase and that during that work hour no one came, had gone away. We have seen a similar example of dispersion in the King's apartment on the day of the attack of January 5, 1757, because that prince was not to return to Versailles that day.

The Duchesse de Phalaris was therefore obliged to run to the courtyards to bring someone. The crowd was soon in the apartment, but more than a half hour passed before a surgeon was found. Finally one came and the prince was bled; he was dead.

Thus perished at the age of forty-nine years and a few months one of the most amiable men in the world, full of wit, talents, military courage, goodness, humanity, and one of the worst princes, that is to say, one of the least able to govern.

La Vrillière went at once to announce the death of the Duc d'Orléans to the King and to the Bishop of Fréjus; from there to M. le duc, whom he exhorted to ask for the place of premier minister; went at once into his offices, and to provide for all emergencies he had a patent drawn up modelled after that of the Duc d'Orléans. Provided with this document and the formula of the oath, he returned to the King's rooms where M. le duc had already betaken himself, followed by a crowd of courtiers.

The King, all in tears, had near him the Bishop of Fréjus who, after having allowed the first moments of grief to pass, said to him that, in order to repair the loss he had just made, the most fitting thing to do was to request M. le duc to accept the place of premier minister. The King without replying, looked at the bishop, and gave his approbation by a simple nod of the head. M. le duc

offered his thanks at once. La Vrillière, then drawing from his pocket the formula of the oath, asked the prelate if it were not in order to have it taken at once. The bishop much approved of it and proposed it to the King, who, consequently, approved of it also. M. le duc took the oath and all was finished an hour after the death of the Duc d'Orléans.

The Bishop of Fréjus could have taken possession of the ministry just as easily as he had it given to M. le duc. His friends advised him to do it, but the prelate, full of ambition for the strength of power, did not see fit to so suddenly manifest his views and flattered himself of secretly governing behind the throne of a young prince with whose incapacity he was acquainted. In case of errors he knew, and since then has well proved, that he was in a position to destroy his work, should he have occasion to repent for having done it.

The sentiments aroused by the death of the Duc d'Orléans were very different, according to the various interests. His intimates said that France was losing a great prince, because he bestowed

favours on them, and had pleasant suppers with him.

The devout by profession spoke with complacency of that death as of a visible punishment of God. Pious souls groaned at it. The two Church parties did not regret him; the Jansenists after a glimmer of hope of rising again, saw themselves once more sacrificed to their enemies; the *constitutionnaires* did not consider their triumph complete.

The soldier and specially the subaltern who is the body and soul of the troops, in despair at seeing distinctions, ranks given to protection, intrigue, or sold by the courtiers or by women, humiliated at having to respect more an office clerk than a marshal of France, sighed for a change of administration that did not come.

The middle class of citizens, more attached to the State and to the morals, saw the fruits of its economy lost, fortunes, patrimonies overthrown, properties uncertain, vice without shame, decency despised, scandal held in honour. They were reduced to the position of regretting even the hypocrisy of the former Court. It cannot be de-

nied that the Regency was the epoch, the principal cause, and that it set the example and gave the signal of open corruption.

Besides does this so-called quiet Regency deserve the praise for having preserved or purchased peace abroad, when it has caused upset and ruin at home? The English alone might have regretted the Duc d'Orléans had they not found the same complacency under the following ministry.



## NOTES

AGUESSEAU (Henri François d'), a French magistrate, born at Limoges. An eloquent orator and profound scholar, he distinguished himself in the midst of the corrupt Court of Louis XV by the elevation of his character, an admirable integrity and the most absolute devotion to public interests.

ALBERONI (Julio), an Italian abbé and Spanish minister, born at Fiorenzuola, near Parma. Son of a gardener, he attained the highest places through his parasitical suppleness and lively wit. Having become cardinal and minister to Philip V, he sought, on the morrow of the signing of the treaty of Utrecht, to raise Spain from its decadence, established means of securing information throughout all Europe and particularly sought through the medium of his ambassador in France, Cellamare, to have the regency of Louis XV given to his Sovereign; but he failed and was exiled (1664-1752).

CELLAMARE (Antonio de), a Spanish diplomat, born at Naples, Spanish ambassador to the Court of France during the minority of Louis XV. He conspired to serve the interest of Alberoni, against the Regent, but was arrested and conducted to the frontier (1657-1733).

CONSTITUTION UNIGENITUS, a bull of 1713 by which Pope Clement XI condemned Jansenism. Several French prelates refused to receive the bull, which was, during the entire first part of the eighteenth century,



the subject of furious strife between the jansenists of the Clergy or of the Parliament and the Jesuits.

DUBOIS (Guillaume *cardinal*), minister during the Regency, born at Brive. Of a low and perverse character, he nevertheless gave evidence of serious diplomatic talent (1656-1723).

FLEURY (André Hercule, *cardinal de*), Bishop of Fréjus, minister of Louis XV, born at Lodève (1653-1743).

GASTON, see ORLÉANS.

GEORGE I, born in 1660, at Osnabruck, King of England from 1714 to 1727, the first of the dynasty of Hanover.

INFANTA, see MARIE ANNE VICTORIA.

JAMES II, son of Charles I, born in 1633, King of England 1685; dethroned by William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, in 1688, he ended his life in France at the château of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, in 1702.—His son, James Stuart, called the *pretender* or the *chevalier de Saint-George*, born in London, made several unsuccessful attempts to recover the throne (1688-1766).

JANSENISM. The doctrines of Cornelius Jansen which tended to limit the free-will of man, were defended in France by Arnault and by the theologians of Port-Royal; but they were disputed by the Jesuits, against whom Pascal at that time wrote the famous *Lettres provinciales*, and condemned by the Sorbonne and by Pope Urban VIII. Port-Royal, in spite of the persecution of Louis XIV, was for a long time the principal refuge of the Jansenist doctrine; the latter after the destruction of the monastery, was again condemned by the Pope in the person of Father Quesnel, in the bull

Unigenitus (1713), whose acceptance was imposed on all, under penalty of refusal of the sacraments.

JOLY DE FLEURY (Guillaume François), a French magistrate, born in Paris (1675-1756).

LAUZUN (Antonin, *duc de*), a personage who played a brilliant and adventurous part at the Court of Louis XIV, and who has remained one of the types of the clever and pretentious courtiers; he married *la grande Mademoiselle*, first cousin to Louis XIV (1632-1723).

LAW (John), a famous financier, born in Edinburgh, controller general of the Finances of France, he was the founder of the *Compagnie des Indes* and organized during the Regency a banking system which resulted in frightful bankruptcy (1671-1729).

LETTRE DE CACHET. Letters closed with the King's seal and which usually contained an arbitrary order of exile or imprisonment.

MADAME, Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria, known as the Princesse Palatine, born at Heidelberg. Wife of *Monsieur*, duc d'Orléans and mother of the Regent.

MAINE (Louis Auguste de Bourbon, *duc du*), legitimated son of Louis XIV and of Mme. de Montespan, born at Versailles (1670-1736).—His wife, Louise de Bourbon, granddaughter of the Great Condé, held at her château de Sceaux a political salon and involved the duc in the Cellamare conspiracy (1676-1753).

MAINTENON (Françoise d'Aubigné, *marquise de*), granddaughter of Agrippa d'Aubigné. Born at Niort in the Calvinist religion, she was converted to Catholicism, accepted out of necessity the hand of the poet Scarron (1652), became a widow in 1660, was secretly entrusted with the education of the children of Louis XIV and of Mme. de Montespan, succeeded in supplanting the

latter and after the death of Marie-Thérèse, was wedded to Louis XIV by a secret marriage (1684). She exercised over Louis XIV an influence not always beneficent. The King being dead (1715), she withdrew to the Maison de Saint-Cyr, which she had founded for the education of poor girls of noble birth (1635-1719).

MARIE ANNE VICTORIA, Infanta of Spain, born in Madrid in 1718, was betrothed to Louis XV and came to Paris in 1722. She was sent back to Spain by Monsieur le duc (de Bourbon), who became prime minister (1723-1726), on the death of the Regent.

MONSIEUR, duc d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIV, and father of the Regent.

MONTESPAN (Françoise Athénaïs de Rochechouart, *marquise de*), a favourite of Louis XIV, born at the château of Tonnay-Charente (1641-1707).

NANTES (*Edict of*), Edict rendered by Henri IV in 1598 in favor of the Protestants. It authorized Calvinistic worship, excepting at Court and in Paris; the Protestants were allowed four universities or academies, certain places in the Parliament, etc. But as early as the minority of Louis XIV, these privileges were suppressed one by one, and the King himself revoked the edict in 1685. The revocation brought about the expatriation of a large number of Protestants, among the most active and best workers of the French nation.

NOAILLES (Louis Antoine de), *cardinal*, Archbishop of Paris (1651-1729).

ORLÉANS (*duc d'*), Philippe II, the Regent (1674-1723).

ORLÉANS (Gaston d'), brother of Louis XIII, was named lieutenant general of the Kingdom on the death of his brother (1608-1660).

PETER I, the Great, Czar of Russia (1672 1725).

PHILIP V, grandson of Louis XIV, first duc d'Anjou, born at Versailles, King of Spain from 1700 to 1746; he made praiseworthy efforts to raise Spain from its decadence.

PORT-ROYAL, an abbey near Chevreuse (Seine-et-Oise). The recluses of Port-Royal allied themselves with the jansenists, and the abbey, after heated discussions with the ecclesiastic authorities, was closed in 1705 by order of Louis XIV. The abbey itself was destroyed in 1710.

QUINCAMPOIX (*Rue*), a street of Paris, parallel to rue Saint Martin. It is there that, during the Regency, the financier Law established his bank.

RICHELIEU (Armand *duc de*), Marshal of France, born in Paris, grand-nephew of the cardinal. Witty, but of doubtful morality, he played a brilliant part at the Court of Louis XIV, during the Regency and during the reign of Louis XV; in 1757, he took Port-Mahon (1696-1788).

SARTINES, the son of Sartines of whom Duclos speaks was the grandfather of the celebrated lieutenant of police Sartine who held an important position during the reign of Louis XV.

UNIGENITUS (see CONSTITUTION).

VILLEROI (François de), Marshal of France, born in Paris. He was a clever courtier, but a poor general, he was defeated at Ramillies (1644-1730).

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